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ABSTRACT

This document, which is intended to provide technical assistance to individuals responsible for integrating year-round and summer employment and training services for youth under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), contains case studies of eight employment and training programs that have already or are in the process of integrating their summer and year-round youth services. Each case study contains information on some or all of the following topics: program objectives; status of development of a comprehensive youth strategy; recruitment and selection of participants; participant assessment and the process of developing individualized services; services provided; preparation for postsecondary education and/or unsubsidized employment; linkages with other programs; job development, job placement, and follow-up; outcomes achieved by participants; the program's overall effectiveness; and a program contact. The programs profiled are as follows: (1) Youth Start (which serves a 12-county service delivery area in Maine); (2) Work for Worcester's Youth (Worcester, Massachusetts); (3) Eagle Enterprises (Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey); (4) the Step-Up Program (Milwaukee, Wisconsin); (5) the Southeast Minnesota Year-Round Youth Employment Program (Rochester, Minnesota); (6) Pima County Community Services (Tuscon, Arizona); (7) the San Diego Workforce Partnership (San Diego, California); and (8) the Northwest Washington Workforce Development Council (Bellingham, Washington). (MN)

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INTEGRATING YEAR-ROUND AND SUMMER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES FOR YOUTH UNDER THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT:

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Executive Summary i

Chapter 1: Youth Start, 12-County SDA, Maine 1

Chapter 2: Work for Worcester's Youth, Worcester, Massachusetts 21

Chapter 3: Eagle Enterprises, Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey 33

Chapter 4: The Step-Up Program, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 47

Chapter 5: SE Minnesota Year-Round Youth Employment Program, Rochester, Minnesota 65

Chapter 6: Pima County Community Services, Tucson, Arizona 81

Chapter 7: San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego, California 97

Chapter 8: NW Washington Workforce Development Council, Bellingham, Washington 113

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) provides a new framework for a reformed national workforce preparation and employment system that will be designed to meet the needs of the nation's employers, job seekers and those who want to further their careers. In particular, certain provisions of WIA now substantially reform youth programming and place new emphasis on serving youth within a comprehensive statewide and local workforce development system that integrates both summer and year-round services for youth.

Under contract with the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA), Westat and its subcontractor, Decision Information Resources, Inc. (DIR), have developed a technical assistance guide that documents the experience of eight employment and training programs that have successfully integrated or are in the process of integrating their summer and year-round youth services. A case study of each program is provided along with key "lessons learned" that will be utilized by DOL policymakers in providing technical assistance and guidance to the field in developing and implementing effective comprehensive youth strategies.

BACKGROUND

The summer employment and training program for youth, and the in-school and out-of-school youth training services provided during the rest of the year, have been conducted as separate programs under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). The summer and year-round programs, although they targeted the same disadvantaged youth population, were separately authorized and funded. Funds for the two programs were allocated separately to the states and local areas. The year-round youth program was subject to performance standards; the summer program was not. In Westat's 1993 process evaluation of the JTPA summer program,[1] the large majority of service delivery areas (SDAs) surveyed felt that the summer program could be improved if it were integrated with the JTPA school year program.

In recent years, DOL/ETA has sought, administratively, to work toward the development of a comprehensive youth program. A major step in this direction was the discretion given to the SDAs to transfer funds between the two programs. DOL's annual guidance to the states and SDAs on the summer program contained language urging that linkages between the summer and year-round programs be developed or strengthened.

The development of comprehensive youth programs at the state and local levels received major legislative support with the enactment of WIA in 1998. WIA makes major changes in the way employment and training services are delivered, creating a new governance structure consisting of state and local workforce investment boards, a streamlined one-stop delivery system, and a network of partnerships between WIA and other human service programs. In the area of youth services, one of the most important changes was the consolidation of JTPA's year-round youth training (Title II-C) and summer program (Title II-B) funding streams into a single formula-based youth funding stream. Summer employment is no longer funded or administered separately. It becomes one of a series of services that are available in formulating service strategies for individual youth. As section 664.600(d) of the WIA regulations provides:

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[1] Westat, The 1993 Summer Youth Employment and Training Program, February 1994.

> The summer youth employment opportunities element is not intended to be a stand-alone program. Local programs should integrate a youth's participation in that element into a comprehensive strategy for addressing the youth's employment and training needs.

Under a contract with DOL, Westat's task was to develop a technical assistance guide (TAG) that could be used to assist states and SDAs in integrating their year-round and summer programs and developing comprehensive youth strategies as part of their transition to WIA. The DOL regional offices were asked to nominate programs for inclusion in this study. Of the 20 nominated, 8 were selected because they either demonstrated operating experience in integrating summer and year-round programs or were actively engaged in planning the development of comprehensive, integrated youth programs under WIA. In addition, an effort was made to capture a variety of program approaches and to achieve geographic diversity among the programs selected.

The programs selected for inclusion in the TAG were:

- Youth Start, 12-County SDA, Maine
- Work for Worcester's Youth, Worcester, Massachusetts
- Eagle Enterprises, Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey
- The STEP-UP Program, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- SE Minnesota Year-Round Youth Employment Program, Rochester, Minnesota
- Pima County Community Services, Tucson, Arizona
- San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego, California
- NW Washington Workforce Development Council, Bellingham, Washington

STUDY APPROACH AND STAFFING

Westat developed interview protocols for interviewing key respondents at each of the sites, to collect descriptive information on each of the programs. Protocols were developed for interviews with the following individuals involved in each program:

- Program director;
- Caseworker or school counselor who monitors and counsels youth in the program;
- Contracted service provider;
- School system or SDA staff person with knowledge of the in-school program;
- Teacher in the in-school program;

- Employer who provides services in the program;
- Worksite supervisor of youth receiving these services;
- Students enrolled in in-school programs; and
- Youth enrolled in out-of-school programs.

A data sheet was also developed that was used in collecting quantitative data on each of the programs from the project directors. The draft protocols and data sheet were reviewed by DOL staff. An early site visit to the STEP-UP program in Milwaukee served as a pre-test for the instruments. When the protocols and data sheet were in final form, a site visit report outline, keyed to specific sections in the protocols and data sheet, was developed. All interviewers were asked to follow the site visit report outline in writing their case studies.

On November 8, 1999, an all-day training session was held at Westat for the interviewers who would be visiting each of the program sites. In a Training and Employment Information Notice (TEIN), DOL/ETA informed the employment and training system of the programs selected and outlined the scope and purpose of Westat's study. Site visits, lasting 2 to 2-1/2 days each, were conducted by Westat and DIR staff during the period November-December 1999. Prior to the site visits, data sheets were circulated to the program directors with the request that they be completed prior to the visits. During January-February 2000, case studies were written by the interviewers and checked for accuracy by the program contacts. Also, during this period, an overview of the case studies was written. A pre-draft of the TAG was submitted to DOL/ETA on February 16, 2000 and a second draft was submitted on March 14. DOL/ETA comments on the drafts are incorporated in this final version.

The study was carried out under the general direction of Ellen Tenenbaum, Westat project director. The interview protocols were developed by Lloyd Feldman, senior consultant to Westat. Mr. Feldman prepared the section on ideas for summer/school-year integration. The case studies (Chapters 1 - 8) were prepared by Rob Farling, Crystal MacAllum, Carrie Markovitz, Chris Obester, Patricia Troppe and Ms. Tenenbaum of Westat, Kari Alexander, consultant to Westat, and Russell Jackson, Norman Jones, and Carol Pistorino of DIR.

PLANNING AND PROVIDING MANDATED SERVICES UNDER WIA

The legislation requires, for the first time, that local programs make the following ten program services available to youth participants in developing the youth's individual service strategies:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school offerings;
- Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
- Paid and unpaid work experience, including internships and job shadowing;
- Occupational skills training;

- Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision-making and teamwork;

- Supportive services, such as child care and transportation assistance;

- Adult mentoring for at least 12 months, which may be during or after program participation;

- Followup services for at least 12 months; and

- Comprehensive guidance and counseling.

As summarized in Table ES-1, the programs featured in this guide are in various stages of preparedness to have these program elements in place. The staff of each program have considered each program element and are providing or planning to provide those that meet the needs of the program's own youth.

IDEAS FOR SUMMER/SCHOOL-YEAR INTEGRATION: THEMES FROM THE CASE STUDIES

The programs profiled in this casebook are all in the process of making the transition to implementation under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Most have had experience, under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), in integrating stand-alone summer programs into a more coherent system of year-round services for youth. For some, their experience is limited, but their plans for integration are well-advanced. Each of these 8 programs is unique, and thus it would be misleading to draw firm guidelines for integrating summer and school-year programs from their collective experience. However, certain themes recur in these case studies that are identified in this overview. The examples, drawn from the case studies, cited under each of these theme headings, offer some useful ideas that local WIA programs should consider in responding to WIA's mandate to develop comprehensive year-round programs for youth.

This overview does not exhaust the many additional ideas and suggestions contained in the case studies. For readers interested in pursuing further any aspect of these programs, the name, address, phone and fax number of a contact person are listed at the conclusion of each case study.

Year-Round Coordinators/Counselors

A key feature of several programs is the establishment of coordinator or counselor positions to plan and oversee youths' summer/school-year programs. The coordinators help ensure that a youth's summer work experience and education activities complement or are a continuation of services provided during the school year through the development of a year-round, individualized service plan. In one SDA, a youth coordinator is located year-round in each of the locality's high schools, thus giving the youth ready access to the coordinator 12 months of the year. In others, the coordinators or counselors are located in One-Stop centers but meet regularly with youth at participating schools and worksites.

- In Milwaukee's STEP-UP program, 15 coordinators are based throughout all of the city's public schools. The coordinators recruit youth for the program and have a caseload of 50 WIA-eligible students with whom they work individually throughout the school year and during the summer. For each youth in their caseload, the coordinators are responsible for assessment, development of individual service plans, training youth in competencies in which they are deficient, developing appropriate part-time and summer job opportunities and monitoring the youth's work experience assignments, on-site. Youth have access to the coordinators on a daily basis year-round—a factor that the program staff feel helps explain the program's high completion rate.

- The integration of services in the Youth Start program in Maine's 12-county SDA relies heavily on the program's counselors who are located in the One-Stop Career Centers. Described as the "linchpin" of the program, the counselors plan and track the experience of their clientele, the large majority of whom are out-of-school youth. In addition to designing a package of services tailored to an individual youth's needs, counselors serve as advocates for youth, provide guidance, and serve as mentors throughout the youth's program experience. To ensure continuity throughout the year, the counselors have made flexible use of JTPA IIC and IIB funds since 1995 when the Private Industry Council (PIC) directed that the youth program be conducted on a year-round basis.

- Since 1993, the SE Minnesota Youth Services Program has been team-oriented, based on the Youth Service Corps model. Under the supervision of counselors, groups of youth engage in developmental activities and, mostly during the summer, large-scale community projects. The counselors are the primary service providers during the school year and during the summer for those youth who receive linked summer/school-year services. The counselors are responsible for all aspects of program delivery: recruitment, orientation, project and activity development (with youth input), guidance, and followup. The youth typically meet with counselors once or twice a week. During the summers, when the teams work on larger scale community projects as well as engage in developmental activities, counselors are assisted by adult team leaders.

- In NW Washington, the central focus of the integrated youth program is the close, ongoing relationship between individual youth and their coordinators throughout the summer and the school year. The coordinators are employed by the PIC and are located in the PIC's One-Stop centers. Each coordinator has a caseload of 10-20 in-school and/or out-of-school youth. Coordinators recruit youth, conduct assessments (in close consultation with the youth's teachers, guidance counselor, or other PIC staff), and work with the youth in developing a sequence of educational, employment, and training services tailored to meet their individual needs. An important tool in this process is the set of guidelines developed by the PIC that are used by the coordinators in determining the continuing school-year services needed by summer participants in order to achieve the competencies designated in the youth's individual development plan.

Designing Programs around Specific Vocations or Career Paths

Some SDAs have designed their summer/school-year programs around specific vocational areas or career paths in which youth have expressed a particular interest. In these programs, summer work experience, part-time jobs or internships during the school year, and classroom instruction in vocational skills are all part of a coherent occupationally oriented, year-round program. Typically, these programs involve close cooperation between the SDA, the public school system, specialized service providers, and local employers.

- Pima County, Arizona, has introduced an integrated program for in-school youth that uses a school-to-work approach. The program model combines a summer familiarization component followed by related after-school activities when the youth return to school. During the summer familiarization component, youth receive classroom instruction and work experience in their

Table ES-1: WIA mandated services across the featured programs

Programs	Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to school completion/GED	Alternative secondary school offerings	Summer employment opportunities	Paid and unpaid work experience	Occupational skills training
Youth Start **12 County SDA, Maine**	Completion of secondary education is the youth's top priority. Incoming participants who need this are referred to an adult education program or GED preparation class.	About one-quarter of participants are attending alternative schools.	There is no summer-only component of Youth Start.; the services a youth receives are based on his/her particular needs whatever the time of year.	Almost half of enrolled youth have had paid work experience through Youth Start. Community service, volunteer jobs, and job shadowing are also encouraged.	In 1999, 14% received occupational skills training through educational institutions, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships.
Work for Worcester's Youth **Worcester Public Schools (WPS)** **Worcester, Massachusetts**	In –school participants in need of tutoring or special instruction may obtain additional help from their individual school's available services.	10% of program participants were out-of-school under the JTPA definition, including some students in alternative schools.	Work for Worcester's Youth (WWY) is Worcester's summer employment program for youth ages 14-21; it is one component of the year-round school-to-work program. All positions are paid.	All participants receive work experience over the summer in a selected career area. School-year internships with employers are a central feature; most are unpaid.	All program participants receive this. Every student has a work-based learning plan grounded in the SCANS competencies.
Eagle Enterprises **Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey**	All participants receive tutoring and study skills training.	A few participants are attending alternative schools.	Eagle Enterprises has 3 components, one of which is its Summer Youth Employment and Training program.	The program is designed to provide youth with work experience that emphasizes progressively more responsibility and less direct supervision.	All participants receive occupational skills training.
The STEP-UP Program **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**	Any student who needs tutoring is referred to school personnel to receive tutoring.	Half of the participants are attending alternative schools; the 15 coordinators, based in Milwaukee high schools, also have responsibility for 22 alternative high schools in the Milwaukee Public Schools system.	During the summers, youth apply the competencies learned in the school-year program to their summer jobs.	During the summer, the program provides subsidized work experience in public agencies and community-based organizations and, for older youth, unsubsidized summer jobs in the private sector.	As of 1999, 13% received occupational skills training through 2 specially developed programs in computer and media skills training.
SE Minnesota Year-Round Youth Employment Program **Rochester, Minnesota**	Each participant is assessed for needs; more than half of in-school participants and a few of the out-of-school youth receive tutoring and study skills training.	The most important linkage the program has is with the alternative schools and alternative centers. Typically, at-risk students at the alternative schools are directed into off-campus work programs.	The summer experience for youth has been based on the Youth Service Corps model since 1993 and involves teams of youth participating in small-scale group activities and larger projects, both in the classroom and in the community.	Work experience takes the form of team-based community service work.	40% of in-school participants and 9% of out-of-school participants receive occupational skills training.
Pima County Community Services **Tucson, Arizona**	Every participant is assessed for needs; almost 4 in 10 participants receive tutoring and study skills training; the Las Artes program combines GED preparation with vocational arts training for out-of-school youth.	The Marana Construction Works program is an integrated program for youth in an alternative school outside of Tucson with an emphasis on earning a GED while learning construction in the alternative school.	The Pledge-a-Job (PAJ) program matches in-school students with after-school and summer placements pledged by private sector employers.	The in-school program uses a school-to-work approach where youth receive classroom instruction and work experience in a selected occupational area.	Students can receive occupational work experience in three areas-- nursing, auto mechanics, and construction.
San Diego Workforce Partnership **San Diego, California**	All summer program participants receive tutoring and/or study skills training during the school year; those who have dropped out will receive assistance in obtaining their GED.	The program includes 16- and 17-year-olds attending alternative schools.	Starting in summer 2000, the program will offer a summer internship program, supplemented with related services and enhancement activities during the school year.	The program is targeted toward at-risk youth with no work experience; uses internships to build aconnection from what is learned in school to what is needed in the workplace.	All students involved in the program are required to enroll in an occupational skills program.
NW Washington Workforce Development Council **Bellingham, Washington**	All summer program participants receive tutoring and study skills training as needed, resulting from their individual assessment; the program provides GED preparation/ exam for dropouts.	Learning Centers, located at most of the high schools and local colleges, provide participants the opportunity to make up course credits and graduate high school or earn their GED.	Summer work may be combined with summer school. Summer work is always connected to academic and occupational learning via SCANS.	Work experience is offered over the summer in conjunction with summer school, as needed. After-school jobs are also being developed during the school year.	Participants must fulfill a state-mandated diversified occupation/ career preparation requirement; programs have developed around specific vocational areas.

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Table ES-1: WIA mandated services across the featured programs (continued)

Leadership development opportunities	Supportive services, such as child care or transportation	Adult mentoring	Followup services	Comprehensive guidance and counseling
New Horizons Academy emphasizes decision-making and setting priorities.	Other support services provided by Youth Start include transportation assistance, appropriate work clothing, and help finding child care.	The SDA is implementing a career development mentoring program in cooperation with the Maine Commission for Community Service.	Program staff phone the completer after 3 months (or sooner, on case-by-case basis), ready to provide services. Formal phone followup continues at least 1 year.	Individualized guidance and customized services are an important element of the program; the relationship between the youth and his/her counselor is key.
Work PLUS students interview employers, learning what qualities they believe good leaders possess.	Transportation is provided as a part of some of the internship programs. All students receive bus passes. Child care is available in summer.	Teachers, counselors, and internship supervisors provide daily supervision on-site and monitor the work experiences of youth.	Followup surveys with students may take place; in 1998 a followup survey was conducted with 627 students.	Teachers and counselors provide supervision of the participants over their high school years and offer guidance as appropriate.
Progressively increased responsibility for participants is a key to the program.	Given that these are special-needs students, individuals' needs are constantly addressed; transportation is provided to the work-sites, if needed.	Key to the program's success is the close support, guidance, and discipline provided to youth in the program by a caring adult while they are on a job site.	Allows post-placement followup in a more informal manner; plans are in place to formalize post-placement followup activities.	All participants receive needed guidance and counseling; the program director monitors the progress of all participants and provides guidance.
All participants in the STEP-UP program receive training in 7 competency areas, including leadership development.	Bus passes are provided to youth needing transportation.	Coordinators plan and monitor youth's participation in the program. A role of a worksite supervisor is to serve as a kind of mentor.	Informal followup--participants can use the program coordinator as a resource until they reach the age of 21.	The coordinators monitor youth's participation in the program and offer advice as needed.
Some participants in the out-of-school program receive leadership training. All participants are provided increasingly challenging responsibilities.	Counselors try to organize transportation for youth who need assistance; they consider transportation and child care needs when scheduling projects.	The counselors serve as mentors and role models to the participants.	Post-placement followup consists of the worksite supervisor filling out an evaluation form on the youth, which becomes a part of the youth's ongoing file.	The counselors, who serve as the primary service providers to participants, provide them with individualized guidance over a long period.
Maturity and mastery of the soft skills of a workplace are emphasized in the programs occupational training components.	Barriers to employment, such as transportation, are addressed when placing a youth in employment.	Program staff try to recruit employers who can provide on-the-job guidance and mentoring to participants.	A new Windows-based information system will allow for data on outcomes and tracking.	The youth's case manager and ISS are the foundation for individual comprehensive guidance and counseling.
The program includes a leadership development component for all participants.	Through each youth's ISS, needed support services are sought. Each contracted program assumes this responsibility.	Instead of trying to find outside mentors for youth, ask youth whom they admire (e.g., a family member, a teacher) and work with those individuals to serve as mentors.	Youth in the summer program will receive followup services and activities during the subsequent school year. Individual contractors are responsible for this aspect of the program.	Each contracted service provider develops strategies for providing its youth with appropriate guidance and counseling.
The program presently offers some leadership opportunities and is focusing on offering more such opportunities in the future—for example, preparing and teaching lessons in classrooms.	Each one-stop center offers assistance with barriers to employment, such as transportation, housing, and child care.	The WDC is focusing on ways to expand opportunities for mentoring. Staff provide one-on-one relationships with all participants.	After participants have been placed in jobs, the program coordinators stay in contact with them as long as the youth may need or desire support or assistance.	Each youth's coordinator provides him/her with comprehensive guidance and counseling over a long period.

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selected trade. Those who continue to be interested in a specific career upon completion of the summer component are assigned to a school-to-work transition program. During the school year, youth participate in after-school activities (usually involving classroom instruction in the youth's career field), and they receive occupational work experience, typically on Saturdays. To date, this model has been piloted in 3 areas: nursing; auto mechanics; and construction. Plans call for expanding the model to other vocations, such as meat cutting and auto body repair.

- During the past 2 years, under Milwaukee's STEP-UP program, there has been a concerted effort to build partnerships with government and private and community-based organizations in the Milwaukee area, leveraging JTPA/WIA resources to create special career-oriented, year-round youth employment and training programs. One example is Information Technology 2000, which involves a partnership with the University of Wisconsin and INROADS/Wisconsin (a nonprofit organization specializing in career development). Youth are trained in basic computer skills and soft skills during the summer and then are helped to secure part-time, entry-level information technology jobs in which they work during the school year. In a similar special program, the Milwaukee Youth Media Project, youth receive summer and school-year experience in media skills in the areas of radio, television, and print journalism, with the participation of a local public high school and the Strive Media Institute, a nonprofit organization.

- Work for Worcester's Youth (WWY) is a summer employment program that offers work-based learning placements for youth ages 14-21, regardless of income status. It is an integral part of Worcester's school-to-career program administered by the Worcester public schools (WPS). Economically disadvantaged participants in WWY are funded under JTPA/WIA; funds for other youth are from several state and local programs. All high school students in the WPS system enroll in a comprehensive sequence of core academics and electives in a career "pathway," accompanied by hands-on internships during the school year and summer work experience, under WWY, that provides job tasks that support the development of the career competencies in the student's selected career pathway. WPS has sought to incorporate industry standards into its pathway programs. It has been successful in developing industry-recognized certificates of mastery in three of the pathway programs: early childhood education, business information systems, and food services.

Key Partnerships with Public School Systems

All of the programs reviewed have tapped a variety of resources in their communities in designing and implementing year-round programs for youth. Social service agencies, the juvenile justice system, private employers, community-based organizations, and other local agencies and organizations play important roles in many of the programs, either as service providers or sources of referrals. However, in general, the most important linkage in these year-round youth programs is the relationship between the program sponsors and the local public school systems. Indeed, in one program discussed above—Work for Worcester's Youth—the public school system administers the summer/school year program with the participation of the local JTPA/WIA agency.

- Milwaukee's STEP-UP program is built upon a basic linkage with the Milwaukee school system. This relationship began 10 years ago when the Superintendent of the Milwaukee public schools (MPS) and the CEO of the Milwaukee PIC joined forces to start a youth program that included employment and training coordinators stationed in the school facilities. The MPS provides the coordinators with office space in the schools, access to student records, and entry to the school building when needed. The STEP-UP program provides its own computers, issues work permits to students, and provides students with STEP-UP program services, including pre-employment job readiness and development of work experience and employment opportunities.

- The staff of the SE Minnesota Youth Services Program indicate that the most important linkage in their program is with the alternative schools operated by the school districts and alternative learning centers operated by the state. They have found that alternative schools have greater flexibility than conventional schools in terms of both the nature and timing of the courses provided. This, coupled with the fact that alternative schools focus on at-risk youth, has made for a natural partnership with the PIC. For example, the PIC develops off-campus work experience opportunities for alternative school youth at such locales as a nature center, child care facility or nursing home, with the alternative school providing transportation, sack lunches, and job site supervision. Also, teachers and guidance counselors in alternative schools are important sources of referrals to the program.

- Although Maine's Youth Start program targets out-of-school youth, the local school system is an important partner in the recruitment of participants. High school guidance counselors alert Youth Start staff when students drop out of school. A program counselor will contact the youth and discuss summer/year-round services. High school staff are also involved in the recruitment of in-school youth served by Youth Start. In-school youth served by Youth Start are typically handicapped students referred by special education teachers. In addition, staff in adult and alternative education programs refer their students to Youth Start to learn about employment opportunities that are compatible with their school schedules or for more intensive services.

Providing Progressively Challenging Experiences

Several program directors indicated that integrating their summer and school-year programs enabled them to provide a more extended, coherent plan of services for youth. Longer periods of available time enabled them to structure individual plans of service that allowed for a series of progressively challenging training and work assignments.

- Under its new youth strategy, the San Diego Workforce Partnership will offer in-school and out-of-school youth year-long internship programs. The new year-long format emphasizes career exploration in specific fields of interest, academic performance, and work experience. Over a 12-month period, youth will participate in 3 graduated levels of work-based learning:

  - Level I - Youth receive introductory pre-employment/work maturity skills training and are placed in subsidized or employer-paid entry-level internships and must complete a total of 210 hours.

  - Level II - Youth receive in-depth pre-employment/work maturity training and classroom skills training or an internship in the identified occupation. This second-level internship includes a minimum of 120 hours in which the students receive more advanced skill training in their occupational area and may be employer-paid or subsidized.

  - Level III - At least 30 percent of the participants completing Level II will enter an employer-paid internship, incorporating graduated tasks and skills in the youth's occupational area. Youth must be employed for at least 30 days.

Program staff are offering a series of technical assistance workshops to employers and service providers to assist them in developing internship opportunities.

- Under SE Minnesota's team-centered, project-based year-round youth program, the increasing number of youth who participate for more than a school term are provided with progressively more challenging experiences during the summer and the school year as they continue through the program. The director indicated that an even more extended period of graduated assignments could be provided if youth participated in the program in an open-entry, open-exit manner over the course of a few years. He feels that the "ebb-and-flow" of this experience would allow youth to assimilate the experience, apply the principles learned, and then be ready for more challenging assignments. Under WIA, he will be instructing counselors to develop individual service strategies that provide for intermittent but progressively demanding experiences for each youth.

- The Eagle Enterprise Program, supported by the Atlantic/Cape May Township, New Jersey PIC, is a summer/school-year program designed to help disabled youth, primarily youngsters with learning disabilities and emotional problems, to successfully make the school-to-career transition. Youth participation in school businesses—bagel/coffee stand, a floral shop, and a school store—is a central feature of the program. Each stage of the program—beginning with entry via the summer employment program, followed by school business employment or employment in work-study positions within the school system during the school year, and culminating eventually in placement in unsubsidized employment—provides the youth with progressively higher levels of independence and responsibility.

Summer Portfolios and School-Year Academic Credit

Many of the integrated programs encourage youth to assemble portfolios containing descriptions of the work they performed during the course of the program and evaluations by worksite supervisors and program instructors. The portfolios can be used in preparing resumes and in job interviews. In addition, several of the programs have been able to negotiate with the school systems to award academic credit for the summer experience based upon the contents of the youth's portfolio.

- The NW Washington PIC makes prominent use of portfolios. Whether in-school or out-of-school, participants are asked to keep portfolios of their work. Portfolios include narratives of work experience, evidence of completing related coursework, employer and supervisor evaluations, evidence of meeting the PIC's workforce skill standards and achieving competencies, and books read that were relevant to their work experience and career interests. PIC staff have found that different parts of the portfolios serve different purposes. Academic coursework and evidence of books read may qualify for academic high school credits. A portfolio that highlights work experience and its relation to the workforce skill standards may meet the school system's requirement that all students take a course in occupation/career preparation. Letters of recommendation from employers and supervisors included in a portfolio can be valuable in seeking employment. Staff have found that some school districts will accept a detailed portfolio for academic credit whereas others will not. Early involvement of the school system in program development, particularly of the academic enrichment component, can increase the likelihood of the school district's awarding credits for portfolios.

- In SE Minnesota, counselors view assessment and the development of a youth's individual service strategy as an ongoing process that changes as the relationship with the youth evolves throughout the school year and during the summer months. A youth's portfolio, which he or she maintains with the assistance of the counselor and team leader, is the principal document used for recording this evolving service strategy. The content of the portfolio and the specific records kept vary with each counselor. For example, one counselor organizes the portfolio based on the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) skills. As a result of the program's good working relationship with the local school system, particularly the alternative schools, many schools have given youth academic credit for the portfolios they have created during the summer component of the year-round program.

Using Youth Competencies as a Foundation for Year-Round Services

In several programs, a series of agreed-upon competencies to be achieved through the integrated, year-round program serves as a basic link between the summer and school-year components of the program. The competency standards help determine the services to be provided and a way of evaluating youth's progress in the program. They may be based on principles of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) or on other principles. Typically, developing the list of competencies to be achieved is a joint responsibility of the youth and his/her program coordinator or counselor. Determining the specific tasks and projects the youth will pursue to achieve the competencies may involve the participation of the youth's teacher or work experience employer.

- Worcester's WWY summer employment program is designed to provide a work-based learning experience that is an integral part of the school system's school-to-career initiative. To ensure that the summer work-based experience is relevant to the youth's career interests and skill attainment objectives under the year-round program, a learning plan is developed jointly by the youth's summer employer and the youth's teacher or program coordinator. The learning plan is organized around 9 competencies, founded on SCANS principles, that identify the skills needed to succeed in higher education or the world of work. The teacher or WWY program coordinator works closely with the employer prior to placement to identify specific tasks or projects the student must accomplish at work to meet the corresponding competencies and to support the development of the career competencies in the student's selected career pathway in the school-to-career initiative. The learning plan then serves as a tool to guide the summer work experience.

- NW Washington designs a youth's summer work experience and part-time work experience during the school year so that both contribute to the youth's mastery of SCANS-based workforce skill standards. The skill standards are developed in collaboration with the school system which awards academic credits for summer/school year work experience that reflects these competencies. Evidence of competency achievement is recorded in the youth's portfolio, which contains a narrative of the student's work experience and related coursework in the program. The standards are used in initially assessing the youth, designing curricula that prepare the youth for employment, advising work experience employers concerning skills to be mastered on the job, and in evaluating youth's achievement under the program.

Challenges in Developing Integrated Programs

Moving from stand-alone summer and school-year programs under JTPA Titles IIB and IIC to a year-round, integrated system of services to youth under WIA will not be problem-free. The experiences of the programs profiled in this guide suggest a variety of challenges that may occur during this transition process.

- A strong working relationship with the local school system has been a key factor in the success of Milwaukee's STEP-UP program. However, initially, the presence of STEP-UP coordinators in the schools had a mixed reaction. Some school staff members viewed the coordinators as outsiders, not having earned the same credentials as school staff, not union members, and possibly encroaching upon the school counselors' responsibilities. In some cases, teachers resisted cooperating with the program by, for example, not allowing participants time away from class to go on field trips or visit the career center. To overcome this problem, coordinators devoted considerable time to eliciting cooperation from school staff and emphasizing that STEP-UP should be viewed as an asset rather than as a competitor. One of the coordinators interviewed sent flyers to the teachers outlining the program and the services she would provide. She made it a point to personally introduce herself to the school staff and, to demonstrate that she was part of the school "team," attended school performances, and chaperoned dances.

- As Maine's Youth Start moves to a year-round program under WIA, there will no longer be a swell of youth available for summer employment. Instead, staff anticipate a more even distribution of youth will be employed in subsidized work experience positions throughout the year. They expect an adverse reaction from many local employers who have come to rely on the summer program for free labor. This will be particularly true for employers whose workload increases significantly during the summer. The staff cited the local parks and recreation department which, under the WIA year-round program, will likely receive substantially fewer summer employees than they did under JTPA and will need to adjust to working with fewer subsidized employees.

- Under SE Minnesota's year-round, integrated program, counselors have established longer term and closer relationships with youth. As a result, they have found that, in addition to employability problems, they have also had to address a youth's serious personal problems. To effectively address these problems, counselors have found it essential to maintain close contact with the youth's family and with local social service agencies.

- Finding a way to provide followup services to youth, as distinguished from following up for tracking purposes, is going to call for staff time and resources. The programs in this guide were in various stages of thought and action in following up with youth after program completion. Because long-term followup is a new requirement, most of the programs we visited were still considering ways to make followup a formal component of their programs in compliance with WIA. In this vein, a closely related challenge is defining "“completion” and who is a “completer.” In Maine’s Youth Start program, the counselors follow up with employers and youth at least weekly to monitor the youth’s progress and discuss any problems. Once a participant graduates from the program, which is defined as attaining an unsubsidized job, the staff telephone the youth after 3 months to determine the youth’s employment status and whether the youth is in need of any additional services. Informal contact between the youth and counselor after 3 months is not uncommon. In fact, at least one CareerCenter expects to maintain contact with a youth for up to 3 years. A followup component is embedded within each program coordinator’s responsibilities in the WDC program in Bellingham, Washington. After participants have completed whatever program was mutually set, the coordinator stays in touch with the youth through phone calls or in-person visits to an employer or college, as long as beneficial, depending on the youth’s needs. All followup contacts are documented by the coordinator and submitted to the MIS staff for entry into program records.

Other programs we visited are developing plans for followup and for recording followup contacts. For example, in Tucson, a new Windows-based information system will allow for followup data.

- A strong emphasis on performance standards may affect recruitment and enrollment strategies. In San Diego, where outcome expectations have been built into newly-approved contracts for integrated youth programs, some programs are reluctant to enroll youth with little likelihood of successfully completing the programs. This has possible implications for reaching youth who are most in need of help.

- As the SDAs move toward integration of their summer and school-year youth programs, they are also faced with the challenge of meeting WIA's requirement that 30 percent of youth funds be used for out-of-school youth. Since alternative school enrollees are no longer defined as out-of-school youth, the programs have had to be creative in finding ways to locate and recruit older youth who are not attending schools of any kind. Pima County has an arrangement with the juvenile court system, which has assigned a juvenile court officer housed at the One-Stop center to work with the program on recruitment. Under a memorandum of understanding between the NW Washington PIC and the school district, the PIC can reach WIA-eligible youth by examining dropout lists. San Diego pursues an aggressive approach to recruiting out-of-school youth that includes going to shopping malls, "hanging out" in other places frequented by youth, and working closely with a local truancy abatement program.

- The programs have recognized that, as a result of providing more extended services to individual youth under integrated, year-round programs, they will be serving fewer youth with their WIA youth allocations. Maine's Youth Start program has acknowledged that they will leverage resources of other agencies in order to meet the needs of youth residing in the rural area served by the program. They have undertaken a multi-faceted approach to establishing these linkages, which include: two-way referrals in which other agencies refer youth to the Youth Start program and Youth Start, in turn, refers youth to these agencies/organizations for services not available in the program; co-location of other agency staff at their One-Stop centers; and frequent meetings with staff of other agencies and programs to exchange information on available resources.

YOUTH START
12-COUNTY SDA, MAINE

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Approximately 1,200 served during PY 1999; 85% out-of-school	
Characteristics of enrollees[1]	
Gender	
Male:	45%
Female:	55%
Race	
White (non-Hispanic):	96%
African American	1%
Hispanic	1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2%
Age	
14-15	2%
16-19	73%
20-21	25%
Family's receipt of welfare/other benefits	
a) Percentage of participants whose families received any form of public assistance:	100%
b) Percentage of participants whose families received each of the following:	
-- % AFDC/TANF	15%
-- % Food stamps	40%
-- % Unemployment compensation	4%
-- % SSI	7%
-- % Gen. assistance or home relief	24%
-- % Refugee assistance	1%
Services provided to out-of-school youth[2] (estimates)	
Tutoring, study skills training & instruction leading to school completion	36%
Paid and unpaid work experience, including internships and job shadowing	46%
Occupational skills training	14%
Supportive services	9%
Job search and placement assistance, including placement in advanced education or training	64%

INTRODUCTION

The Youth Start program provides employment, education, and training services for youth in rural Maine. Youth Start is administered by the Workforce Development Centers in Maine's 12-county service delivery area (SDA). Approximately 1,200 "enrolled" (i.e., JTPA-eligible) youth received Youth Start services during PY 1999, and 85 percent of them were out-of-school youth. About one-quarter of out-of-school youth attend an alternative school. They tend to be older youth, 17 to 21 years old for the most part.

The Youth Start program has evolved over the past 4 years from a program restricted to JTPA-eligible youth to a program that offers something for all persons under the age of 25 in the SDA. As a result, the Youth Start program is advertised as a "gateway to all youth employment and training programs in Maine." However, the most intensive services are limited to enrolled out-of-school youth. Services are typically delivered at One-Stop CareerCenters.

It is important to note that although the Youth Start model has been adopted SDA-wide, implementation of the program, which is still underway, has not been uniform throughout the 12 counties. One county—served by the Saco CareerCenter—began implementing an integrated year-round program in 1997. The remaining counties have adopted the out-of-school youth focus and 3-tier services approach (described below), and all locations are moving to a seamless year-round program this year under WIA. SDA staff anticipate that moving to a year-round program will give them more time and flexibility to work with youth in developing the skills needed for permanent employment.

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[1] Data on youth characteristics were not available for in-school and out-of-school youth separately. Data represent JTPA IIC enrollees from 7/1/99 to 11/22/99.

[2] Estimates represent weighted percentages of services received by IIB and IIC out-of-school youth from 4/99 to 12/99.

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Outcomes for youth (Estimates)

Completion rates[3]

IIB youth	
-- enrolled in IIC services	33%
-- completed program	41%
-- did not complete program	26%
IIC youth	
-- still receiving services	78%
-- completed program	21%
-- did not complete program	1%

Positive outcome rate[4]

	IIB	IIC
Entered employment	7%	72%
Average wage at placement	$6.23	$6.80
Employability enhancement	68%	63%

Youth Start services are tailored to a youth's needs. Therefore, the intensity and duration of services vary across participants. Each youth is assigned to a Youth Start counselor who coordinates and integrates all of the youth's services throughout his Youth Start experience. Youth Start services are organized into 3 tiers. Youth may access services in one or more tiers depending on their needs and JTPA eligibility.

- Tier I services are general self-help and information services, such as self-assessment of needs, job search assistance, access to job banks and other labor market information and information on life skills such as managing single parenthood. Tier I also includes referrals to services not available at CareerCenters, such as a GED preparation class. All youth can participate in Tier I services regardless of income.

- Tier II services are group-oriented services such as workshops in resume writing, interviewing, and job planning; academic remediation; and employer-sponsored on-site career exploration field trips. These services are open to as many youth as possible.

- Tier III services are intensive services limited to enrolled youth. Examples of Tier III services include customized and on-the-job training, paid work experience in the public sector, and tryout employment training in the private sector.

This report highlights the experiences of enrolled youth and out-of-school enrolled youth, in particular.

The New Horizons Academy (NHA) is a new Youth Start activity. The Academy is a 4-week residential program set on a college campus and is universally accessible. That is, it is open to all youth 18 through 24 and has no income eligibility requirements. NHA offers a highly structured curriculum that focuses on esteem building, self-assessment, career exploration, and career planning. The first Academy will operate in early 2000 with 30 youth participants. The SDA staff anticipates running 3 Academies prior to June 30, 2000.

Youth Start is supported by JTPA IIB and IIC funds and a 3-year, $1 million Youth Start demonstration grant from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). The DOL demonstration grant covers the cost of the 3 New Horizons Academies and funds 4 staff positions devoted to developing the universal access component of Youth Start (i.e., services available to all youth).

Two CareerCenters—in Saco and Lewiston—were visited for this case study. Significant distinctions between the two will be noted throughout the report. For example, the CareerCenter at Saco is Youth Start's "early implementation" site, with an integrated year-round program underway for 3 years. In contrast, the CareerCenter at Lewiston represents the experiences of the other areas in the SDA that are just beginning to fully implement a year-round program. In addition, Lewiston operates a much larger

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[3] Completion rate reflects percentage of youth who had a positive separation. That is, youth who exited the program after completing their plan, whatever the goal may have been. Data were not available for in-school and out-of-school youth separately. IIC data reflect youth enrolled between 7/99 to 12/99.

[4] Estimates for IIC youth reflect outcomes of youth who have completed their IIC experience between 7/99 and 12/99.

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Youth Start program, serving approximately 250 enrolled youth across a tri-county area, compared to the 100 enrolled youth from one county served by Saco.

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

Although Maine is not an early implementer of WIA, the 12-county SDA already has several years of experience implementing many WIA provisions. In fact, the executive director notes that "WIA reinforces what we already do." For example, One-Stop delivery centers are not a new idea in this SDA. The SDA's private industry council (PIC) began discussing One-Stop centers in 1992. One-Stop centers are particularly appealing in this rural SDA where transportation is a pervasive problem for youth. One-Stop CareerCenters have been in the development stage for the last 5 to 6 years and operational in each county for the last year.

In addition, the SDA has operating experience in integrating summer and year-round services. Since 1995, the SDA has been moving toward an integrated year-round youth employment focus. The integration of services hinges on the Youth Start counselor located at the One-Stop CareerCenter. For example, at the Saco CareerCenter, a single Youth Start counselor plans and tracks an enrolled youth's participation throughout his/her Youth Start experience. The Youth Start counselor plans year-round services based on the youth's needs identified through assessment. The counselor uses services funded under both JTPA IIC and IIB programs to provide a continuity of services throughout the year. For example, a youth may begin with life skills and employment competency training, funded under IIC, then move into work experience over the summer, funded under IIB. In addition, Youth Start counselors collaborate with staff at other agencies to refer youth to services not available at the One-Stop CareerCenter, such as counseling or childcare.

One factor that has eased the process of integrating services is the SDA's "comprehensive contracting" approach for the delivery of employment services. For nearly 15 years, one contractor within each county has been responsible for the delivery of all JTPA programs. Community-based organizations are the contractors for the JTPA programs in 8 counties, while Maine Department of Labor staff operate the JTPA programs in the remaining four counties.

Comprehensive contracting has helped the SDA move Youth Start to an integrated year-round program in several ways. First, the same staff are working with youth year-round. A single counselor works with the youth throughout his/her experience, regardless whether or not the youth's services are funded under IIB or IIC. Second, Youth Start staff can easily access the resources of the adult JTPA programs throughout the year. For example, Youth Start counselors can place youth participants in job training workshops offered to adult JTPA participants when there are not enough youth to warrant a separate youth workshop. This is an important way to promote the efficient delivery of training services to youth since they may join Youth Start throughout the year. Finally, Youth Start counselors can tap the pool of employers that work with the adult programs for youth worksites. Access to this pool is particularly helpful as more Youth Start participants need jobs throughout the year.

Since the early 1990s, the PIC has had a strong interest in youth services and needs. Although there is a youth subcommittee of the PIC, the executive director indicated that youth services are a priority of the full PIC. As the SDA makes the transition to WIA, the Youth Start program manager expects that the PIC will increase in size somewhat from its current membership of 23 persons. In addition, the current small youth subcommittee will grow into a more diverse Youth Council with the addition of parents, youth, past participants, and representatives from youth service providers such as Corrections, Housing, Human Services, Job Corps, and others.

Across the 12 counties, approximately 85 percent of Youth Start participants are out-of-school youth. The current mix of in-school and out-of-school youth served by the Youth Start program is "no accident" according to the executive director. Instead, the mix is the result of decisions made about 5 years ago. Specifically, the vision for the Youth Start program began to take shape in 1994. At that time, the SDA was operating separate IIB and IIC programs that served both in-school and out-of-school youth. However, the PIC, along with youth services staff, determined that out-of-school youth had more unmet needs than in-school youth, who could access various services through the high schools. As a result, the PIC adopted an out-of-school youth strategy to focus employment and training services on this segment of the population.

The adoption of the out-of-school youth strategy was reinforced in 1995 when the SDA experienced deep cuts in its JTPA IIC program funding and a potential loss of all IIB program funding. At that point, the PIC determined that the limited Federal funds would be best spent on those youth with the greatest unmet needs—i.e., out-of-school youth.

Also in 1995, the PIC redirected the youth employment programs to a year-round focus, which would better serve out-of-school youth. To encourage this transition, a percentage of funding for the summer program (IIB) was transferred to the year-round program (IIC). In 1994 and 1995, 10 percent of IIB program funds were transferred to the year-round IIC program. This percentage increased over time to 25 percent in 1996 and to 40 percent by 1999. Shifting the funds to the year-round program created a more even level in the number of youth served over the course of the year.

The SDA and PIC expect to continue the focus of the Youth Start program on out-of-school youth under WIA.

PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUTH STRATEGY

The executive director described the PIC as a "rudder in the water," guiding the SDA's youth employment focus toward serving out-of-school youth and developing a year-round program. A decisive step in this direction was taken in 1995 when the PIC designed the Youth Start program in response to uncertainty in JTPA funding and the unmet needs of out-of-school youth. Instead of stretching program services too thin, the PIC wanted to target the limited resources toward youth with the most unmet needs. In addition, the PIC and a Youth Work Group, consisting of representatives of youth services staff in the SDA, viewed the longer duration of services through a year-round program as a better approach to helping out-of-school youth move into permanent employment. There was a feeling that the 8 to 10 weeks of the IIB program were not enough time to yield long-term benefits.

While there was general agreement on the benefits of a year-round program to youth, there were some concerns from the youth services staff about how the community would react to a year-round Youth Start program. The program manager noted that "the summer youth program was short, intense, clearly defined, and easier to 'sell' to employers and the community." There was a concern that it would be more difficult to gain employer participation under the year-round program.

In developing the design of the Youth Start program, the SDA also sought input from youth, contractors, employers, social service agencies, and community-based organizations. Input was obtained through regularly scheduled meetings as well as informal meetings. Contractors confirmed that the SDA "actively sought out" their input in the initial design of the Youth Start program and continues to seek their input on new program services such as the New Horizons Academy.

An important role of the SDA in working with the various groups was that of a "convener," rather than a "controller." The executive director noted that the SDA "cannot do it all with JTPA or WIA funds." Instead, the SDA has leveraged resources of other agencies and organizations to avoid duplication of services and increase coordination of services. The SDA will establish memoranda of understanding (MOUs) as it makes the transition to WIA. The executive director commented that the MOUs will strengthen existing linkages and improve coordination with other programs and agencies. He summarized that "you can never do too much for collaboration."

Overall, the executive director was pleased with the planning process. He felt that those involved in the planning process had "the guts to look beyond what existed and set priorities," which was key in a rural area with limited funding. In addition, the executive director credited the "ground-up" group involvement for the success of the planning process.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Recruitment

The Youth Start staff relies primarily on referrals from other agencies and word of mouth to recruit youth. These recruiting methods typically yield program participants who have multiple barriers to employment. In addition, the SDA is experiencing a tight labor market, and many youth are able to get jobs without assistance. This further increases the likelihood that youth seeking Youth Start services are those hardest to employ.

Youth Start counselors receive referrals from a wide range of social service agencies and community-based organizations such as welfare, corrections, homeless shelters, and halfway homes. Youth who are referred may call a Youth Start counselor directly to set up an appointment at the CareerCenter or walk into the CareerCenter on their own.

Although Youth Start targets out-of-school youth, the educational system does assist with program recruitment. For example, a Youth Start counselor at Saco noted that high school guidance counselors alert Youth Start staff to recent dropouts. A counselor then will contact the youth and discuss the services available at the CareerCenter. In addition, staff in adult and alternative education programs refer their students to Youth Start to learn about employment opportunities that can accommodate their class schedule. Finally, high school staff are involved in the recruitment of the relatively few in-school youth served by Youth Start. In-school youth served by Youth Start are typically students with disabilities. They are generally referred to Youth Start staff by special education teachers and staff from local high schools.

Despite their reliance on referrals and word of mouth promotion, Youth Start counselors will also engage in outreach activities to recruit program participants. For example, counselors go to youth centers, local Boys and Girls clubs, and public housing developments and set up tables with brochures and other program materials to discuss with youth. The job developer at Lewiston suggested that getting out of the CareerCenter to meet with youth is particularly beneficial when working with out-of-school youth. Although staff try to make the CareerCenters as open and inviting as possible, sometimes youth are reluctant to go to the centers simply because of their past experiences with adults and structured environments. Youth Start counselors have responded by meeting youth in locations that are more comfortable for the youth. In some cases, a counselor may do a formal intake interview and eligibility assessment on the spot. Other times, the counselor will just invite the youth to the CareerCenter after the initial contact has been made. The Saco Youth Start staff has even set up a mini CareerCenter at an adult education program as a way to bring program information and limited services to youth.

Recruitment activities occur year-round. At Saco, where the year-round program has been under way for several years, referrals come throughout the year, and outreach activities are carried out periodically. The staff maintains a "delicate balance" in their recruiting efforts, however. The Youth Start program at Saco is small in terms of funding and staff. Staff and funding are not available to serve more than approximately 100 enrolled youth. Therefore, the staff refrains from advertising Youth Start to the community at large for fear of attracting more youth than the center can handle. Instead, the staff works primarily with other agencies to recruit those hardest to serve.

In contrast, the staff and funding at the Lewiston center is larger, and staff have traditionally run separate summer and year-round components. The summer component is typically larger, serving approximately 150 youth compared to the nearly 100 youth in the year-round component. As a result, recruiting activities, particularly outreach activities, are heavier in the spring. As Lewiston moves to an integrated year-round program, the staff will rely on the same recruiting methods; however, outreach activities will occur more evenly throughout the year.

Selection

There is no "selection" for universal access services. All young people are encouraged to utilize the Information Centers within each CareerCenter. However, youth must be JTPA-eligible (WIA-eligible under the new legislation) to receive Youth Start's most intensive services. If a youth does not meet the eligibility requirements, there are other, less intensive, services available at the CareerCenter. The selection process is largely the same at both CareerCenters visited. Youth first learn about Youth Start and the various services available. This can occur on site during outreach activities, over the phone when a youth calls to set up an appointment with a counselor, or at the CareerCenter when the youth first arrives. Next, a youth completes an eligibility application form on the computer and meets individually with a Youth Start counselor to determine JTPA eligibility. The application requests information on the youth's age, education, employment background, income, receipt of public assistance, dependents, housing arrangements, criminal history, and whether the youth has a valid driver's license.

All applicants are reviewed against JTPA's 6 barriers to employment and a 7th barrier added by the SDA, receipt of public assistance or member of a family that receives public assistance. The SDA requires that youth who display the most barriers be given priority for enrolled services. However, the Youth Start staff at both CareerCenters indicated that they have been able to serve all eligible youth, so there is no need to rank and select youth according to need. In addition, all youth must be economically disadvantaged for Tier 3 training enrollment. If the youth is eligible for enrolled services, the youth and counselor will work together to develop an Individualized Service Strategy (ISS). Non-eligible youth can participate in Tier 1 – universal access – services. To the extent possible, they can also received Tier 2 services.

The selection process for the New Horizons Academy (NHA) differs from the selection of youth for Tier III, or enrolled, Youth Start services. Youth are recruited through a variety of outreach activities and then must be recommended by Youth Start counselors. In addition, a youth must be out of school, between the ages of 18 and 24, and currently unemployed or working less than 20 hours a week. Interested participants complete an application with information about their work history, future goals, and what they find appealing about NHA. Applicants must also submit 2 personal character references completed by non-family members. The personal references ask about the applicant's social maturity, motivation, dependability, and whether the youth could gain from the experience. Local Youth Start staff are involved in the referral and selection of the youth who will participate in the Academy. To achieve geographic diversity, Youth Start counselors in all 12 counties and youth staff from Maine's 2 other SDAs are being asked to recommend youth for the Academy. Thirty youth will be selected for participation, approximately 70 percent of whom must be JTPA-eligible. In addition, the SDA plans to have equal gender representation among its participants.

Assessment of Recruitment/Selection

Youth Start counselors at both CareerCenters believed that referrals from other agencies was one of most positive things about their recruitment process. In addition, the other recruitment activities such as outreach and meeting with youth outside of the CareerCenter demonstrates the need to be flexible when working with out-of-school youth. From an administrative point of view, counselors at Lewiston are looking forward to moving to a year-round program. This transition will reduce the heavy workload associated with recruiting and assessing a large number of youth for the summer.

Youth Start counselors at both CareerCenters suggested that recruitment for the New Horizons Academy may be difficult. The counselors expect local youth to be reluctant to leave their local area to attend a 4-week program in a more urban setting. In addition, it may also be difficult to find applicants who are unemployed or working part-time who do not have other commitments, such as children, that might make it difficult for them to leave their homes for a month.

The SDA has recently hired 4 staff members to increase the recruitment of all youth to the CareerCenters, regardless of their income, education, or employment history. The staff members will work with Youth Start counselors SDA-wide to promote the universal access component of Youth Start.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

The assessment process has not changed in recent years. Once determining program eligibility, an ISS is developed with information from education and employment skills assessments, the youth's interest inventory, and general discussions with the youth about his/her short- and long-term goals and needs. Basic education skills may be assessed at the CareerCenter through the Test of Basic Adult Education (TABE) or with academic information provided by a local high school or other entity. Job competencies are assessed during the interview with the youth.

The ISS is a comprehensive plan that guides an individual's Youth Start experience. The ISS details an approach to how youth will overcome their deficiencies and transition to employment. In particular, the ISS specifies the youth's long- and short-term goals; documents the youth's initial education, employment, and other strengths and deficiencies; and specifies Youth Start and other services the youth will receive. An important part of the ISS spells out who is responsible for each step detailed in the plan and gives a specific timeframe for accomplishing each task. The roles and responsibilities of the youth are clearly identified in the document. For example, a youth might have to agree to maintain a C average in all required courses in a short-term certificate program or agree to carry out a structured job search upon completion of training. The youth's input is an integral part of the development of the ISS. Both the Youth Start counselor and participant must sign the form. Finally, the ISS serves as a management tool for the Youth Start counselor in that the counselor can use the information to track the youth's progress.

The staff at Saco reported that the ISS became a more meaningful document with the transition to a year-round program. Without the time restrictions of a condensed summer program, the staff can spend more time developing the ISS and provide services over a longer period of time. The ISS is now viewed as a working document that is revisited with the youth periodically throughout his Youth Start experience. Attachment 1 shows a copy of this document.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Overview

The SDA serves approximately 1,200 enrolled youth a year through its Youth Start program, the majority of whom are out of school. The One-Stop CareerCenter serves as the youth's point of entry to employment and training services. One Youth Start counselor serves as the youth's point of contact and manages the youth's experience by devising a program of services at the CareerCenter along with services from other local providers, if necessary. The same services are offered at each CareerCenter. However, services are delivered through a seamless, integrated year-round program at the Saco CareerCenter, while other centers have run separate summer and year-round programs that are in the process of moving toward integrated year round programs under WIA. Under the integrated year-round program, there is no summer component of Youth Start. Instead, the services a youth receives are based on his/her particular needs and has little to do with the time of the year.

Participant Characteristics

The most common barrier to employment faced by Youth Start participants is a deficiency in basic skills. More than half (54 percent) of the program's IIC youth in fall 1999 had a basic skills deficiency. Other difficulties faced by participants include having a disability (32 percent) or being pregnant or having a dependent child (21 percent). Although 4 in 10 participants have completed at least a high school diploma, 25 percent of participants currently attend an alternative high school, and another quarter are high school dropouts.

Few Youth Start participants had any employment experience before coming to a CareerCenter. Just 15 percent worked either full- or part-time before beginning the Youth Start program. All participants received some form of public assistance either directly or as a family member. Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of enrolled youth are between the ages of 16 and 19, and only 2 percent are 15 years old or younger.

The SDA expects that future Youth Start participants will have characteristics similar to those of current participants. In addition, the SDA expects that the number of enrolled youth served will be comparable in the future. Since the SDA has given priority to out-of-school youth, only a small proportion of whom attend alternative schools, the SDA will have little difficulty in meeting the WIA requirement that at least 30 percent of youth funds be expended on out-of-school youth.

Specific Services Provided

There is no typical package of Youth Start services offered to youth. Instead, each youth's combination of services is customized to meet the youth's individual needs. Still, Youth Start staff view the completion of secondary education as the youth's top priority. Placing the youth into an adult education or GED preparation program is paramount. However, many participants are on their own and need employment to support themselves and their dependents. Youth Start counselors place youth in jobs that are related to a youth's career interests and accommodate his/her educational commitments.

Specific Youth Start services are organized into 3 tiers. Tier I and II services may be accessed by all youth under 25 in the SDA, regardless of their income or employment history. However, Tier III services are specialized and are limited to JTPA-eligible youth. The exception is the New Horizons Academy, for which only 70 percent of participants must be WIA-eligible. Table 1 lists the specific services offered under each tier. Services are available year-round. Support services include transportation assistance, appropriate work clothing, and help finding child care.

Job search and placement assistance activities were the most commonly used services by enrolled out-of-school participants. An estimated 64 percent of enrolled out-of-school youth obtained job search and placement assistance between April and December 1999. An estimated 46 percent of enrolled out-of-school youth took advantage of paid work experience through Youth Start.

In addition to the 3-tier services, the SDA is offering 2 new services for Youth Start participants in 2000. They are the NHA and a mentoring program. The executive director sees NHA as a "revolutionary" model for serving out-of-school youth. The goals of NHA are to provide high-quality opportunities for young adults to identify their goals and dreams, enhance their aspirations, discover their capabilities and resources, eliminate fears and misconceptions about attending college, and to help acquaint youth with urban living. Rather than focusing on occupational training, the Academy's major components include career exploration, self-assessment, computer literacy, and personal counseling. During their stay, the 30 NHA participants will observe college classes and attend various seminars and workshops on topics such as decision-making, setting priorities, and risk-taking. Youth will also learn the value of community service by participating in a service work project during one weekend.

Table 1. Youth Start services by tier

Tier I	Self-help & Information	- Life skills information, including economics, daily living, and health - Referrals to services not available at the One-Stop Center - Self-esteem, confidence, and motivation skills information - Work maturity, work search, work safety, and work retention skills information - Assistance in understanding how education affects future potential - Labor market information & mentoring and job shadowing - Information on employment and training programs, business development activities, educational programs, and sources of financial aid - Job search assistance, information on completing applications, developing resumes, improving interviewing skills, gaining employer recommendations - Career exploration, including both traditional and non-traditional careers
Tier II	Group Activities	- Education and job plan development and goal identification - Regular progress evaluation and plan updating - Coordination with educational institutions for credit - Advocacy with other agencies, communities, and businesses for support service - Coordination of opportunities for community service and workplace experiences such as job shadowing, volunteering and mentoring, academic remediation
Tier III	Specialized	- New Horizons Academy - Work experience, limited internship, try-out employment - Rewards or incentives for goal attainment - Occupational skills training through educational institutions, on-the-job training, registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship or the Maine Career Advantage - Job Corps

Youth will also tour local employers' facilities and become familiar with the local labor market. NHA participants will receive a stipend of $50 a week. An important objective of NHA is that youth will develop 2 career goals and leave the Academy with a personalized plan that outlines the steps the youth needs to take to attain these goals, such as entering postsecondary education.

When the 4-week Academy is over, participants will return to their local CareerCenters with their personalized plans. Youth will work with their local Youth Start counselor to implement their plans. The SDA expects that NHA participants will be followed up for 2 years, with counselors tracking their education and employment decisions.

The SDA expects to rotate the Academy among college campuses located in urban areas of the State. The costs associated with the Academy are being covered by in-kind donations and funding from a U.S. Department of Labor demonstration grant. The cost per participant is approximately $1,300.

The SDA is considering various applications of NHA for the future. For example, the SDA may remove the residential aspect of the Academy and operate a 4-week, day-only Academy. Another option under consideration is operating Academies for specific target groups such as youth offenders or teenage mothers. Finally, the SDA may offer 4-day, 3-night "mini-academies" that focus on selected elements from the month-long NHA.

In addition to NHA, the SDA has just completed plans for a mentoring program with the Maine Commission for Community Service. An AmeriCorps Promise Fellow worked closely with the staff at a CareerCenter to develop a tutorial, hard-skills, site-based mentoring program. The mentoring experience, which matches trained adults with youth between the ages of 16 and 24, will last for 6 months, and mentors and proteges will meet one hour a week. The goal of the program is for the youth to develop work readiness and maturity by working through a series of activities and exercises with an adult mentor. By June 2000, the mentoring program will be operating in all 12 counties with approximately 50 matches of mentors and proteges.

A Typical Youth

Although each youth's Youth Start experience is unique, the following describes the type of experience a youth without prior work experience might expect to receive in Youth Start. The Sweeteser Homeless Youth Program (SHYP) is a local program that refers youth to the Youth Start staff at the Saco CareerCenter. Homeless youth assisted by SHYP can be characterized as 'street kids' who are trying to make it on their own. Many are high school dropouts and in need of a job to get on their feet. The SHYP coordinators help these youth access shelters and work with other agencies such as the Department of Human Services to obtain food stamps for the youth. The SHYP staff refer youth to the Youth Start counselors for employment and access to educational services.

SHYP staff may bring a youth to the CareerCenter or the youth may have called ahead to make an appointment with a Youth Start counselor. During the initial contact, the Youth Start counselor will determine the youth's needs and employment interests and discusses the various services available at the CareerCenter. This counselor will be the youth's main point of contact throughout his experience. The youth will complete an application form and interest inventory during the first meeting. At this time, the youth may pick up pamphlets on life skills such as *About Teens and Stress* from the CareerCenter's information center.

A Youth Start counselor suggested that there is an urgency to get the youth involved in the program as soon as possible. These youth may disappear back onto the streets if the process becomes lengthy. It is not uncommon for homeless youth to be lacking the documentation needed to verify program eligibility. Youth Start counselors will help youth obtain the necessary documents by tracking down, for example, a copy of the youth's birth certificate or Social Security card from the appropriate public agency.

Once eligibility has been established and an interest inventory has been completed, a counselor will assess the youth's basic education skills. The counselor may administer the TABE to the youth or contact a local high school to obtain school records that can document education skills. If the youth has not completed secondary education, the counselor puts the youth in contact with an adult education program or GED preparation class. The cost of these education services is covered by the state. A Youth Start counselor commented, "We want them working as much as they can, but we want to include an education piece."

A youth without any prior work experience is typically placed in a paid work experience position with a nonprofit organization. Concurrently, the youth may attend workshops on interviewing skills and developing resumes that will teach him the basic job search skills that he will need in the future. On average, youth work an estimated 32 hours a week and start at the minimum wage. The youth may receive other support services from Youth Start staff. For example, if the youth does not have access to transportation, the Youth Start staff may provide bus passes or pay for a car repair. Another example might be the Youth Start staff giving the youth appropriate work clothing.

The Youth Start staff use the work experience to document the youth's work maturity development including their work ethic (e.g., attendance and punctuality) and interpersonal skills. The Youth Start counselor visits the worksite weekly to discuss the youth's progress and any problems with the employer and youth. In addition, employers provide frequent feedback to the youth on their performance. Employers are aware that the youth's secondary education program is a priority. Therefore, employers give youth some flexibility in their schedules to accommodate educational services. A youth knows that his/her job is not in jeopardy if work is missed to make up a class or devote extra time to studying.

Youth are employed in a work experience position for 4 to 6 months. Once the youth has gained a sufficient level of work maturity, the Youth Start counselor places the youth in a subsidized tryout work experience with a for-profit company. The tryout experience usually complements the youth's career experience more closely than his work experience position. The intent of the tryout experience is to expose the youth to his field of interest and enhance work skills. A youth can stay in a subsidized tryout position for approximately 3 months. Youth in tryout positions generally earn more than the minimum wage. In addition, the Youth Start counselor may authorize a wage increase, usually $0.25 per hour, to reward the youth if he is performing well. Frequently, employers ask participants to stay on after their subsidy has ended. However, if a youth is not asked to stay or wants to change jobs, the youth will have gained job skills and references that will be helpful in finding an unsubsidized job.

As this example illustrates, the summer experience is not distinguishable from the rest of the year under the integrated year-round program. Services are received throughout the year, and their duration varies according to the individual youth's needs.

With the attainment of an unsubsidized job, the youth's experience as an enrolled Youth Start participant is considered complete. The Youth Start counselor follows up with the youth in approximately 3 months to determine whether the youth is still employed or in need of further assistance. Of course, once the youth has completed his Tier III, or enrolled services, he is still eligible to use the general services under Tiers I and II should he need further assistance.

Specific Youth Examples

This section highlights the experiences of 2 Youth Start participants who were interviewed for this case study. Their stories illustrate the individualized nature of the Youth Start program. For a period of time after high school, "John" held seasonal employment and short-lived jobs until he learned about the Youth Start program at a lecture at Central Maine Technical College. A Youth Start counselor was able to find him a summer job located in an auto parts supply store. Most of the summer was spent shadowing experienced employees and learning about the business. When the summer employment ended, John was able to obtain full-time employment in another autoparts supply store as a salesperson. He credits the summer job as a wonderful learning experience, teaching him the skills needed to succeed in that particular career.

"Susan" was referred to the CareerCenter by a youth coordinator at a social service agency. Being a single young mother, her goal was to locate a job that she could develop into a career that would enable her to provide for her child and herself. She received some individual interview training with her Youth Start counselor and then was placed in an insurance franchise where the employer takes on one youth at a time in a subsidized tryout employment position. Susan works 28 hours per week as a support staff member performing mainly administrative tasks. When she first started, she attended a 2-day training session, which was paid for by the company, to learn the company's computer software system. Susan has worked with this employer for 5 months. Her wages were subsidized through Youth Start for the first 3 months and are now paid fully by the employer. Over the 5-month experience, Susan has developed a close relationship with her employer and worksite supervisor and looks to them for career and personal advice. Her work experience has inspired her to become an insurance agent, and she is currently studying to earn her insurance license. Susan has her high school diploma, and this experience has motivated her to attend college at some point in the future.

Employer Participation

The average employer in Maine employs fewer than 20 people. As a result, many Youth Start worksites are small, employing 1 to 2 youth. In addition, many employers also serve as worksite supervisors. This helps the employer establish a working relationship with the youth. Forming a relationship with the youth allows the employer to act as an informal mentor and on-site educator. Some of the employers interviewed believed they were more than just a supervisor, often discussing issues with the youth ranging from troubles in their personal lives to returning to school.

The employers usually take similar approaches to enabling the youth to gain the necessary skills to work in their particular field. The youth is introduced to the business, responsibility is expanded gradually, and at the end of the program, the employer decides whether to hire them full-time.

One employer interviewed owns an auto detailing and accessories company where the youth begins employment simply as a job shadower. The youth "shadows" other workers, observing the work they do and listening to the instructions they receive. When the employer feels the youth has a simple understanding of the business, responsibilities will increase. The responsibilities typically consist of cleaning cars, taking care of the equipment, and cleaning up at the end of the day. The youth is still learning about the job but has had an increase in responsibilities. During the tryout period, the youth are placed in fully subsidized positions. The employer often hires the youth at the conclusion of the program. The employer feels that a strong relationship is established during the 3-month tryout experience and feels comfortable hiring most of these youth for full-time unsubsidized employment.

Preparation for Postsecondary Education and Unsubsidized Employment

In general, few enrolled youth are prepared for postsecondary education when they arrive at the CareerCenter. Instead, many youth have more immediate needs, such as completing high school, obtaining housing, getting a job, and accessing childcare. However, all CareerCenters provide information regarding postsecondary education programs and student financial aid. In addition, counselors help youth who express an interest in pursuing postsecondary education to explore various program options and financial arrangements. Counselors help youth complete financial aid forms. If a youth is seeking short-term postsecondary training, the CareerCenter may be able to cover tuition costs. If that is too costly, counselors may use JTPA funds to cover the cost of books or other expenses. For example, a Youth Start counselor at Saco described an example of a youth who wanted to obtain a medical assistant certificate through an 18-month program at a local college. The counselor helped the youth complete the financial aid forms. In addition, the CareerCenter covered some initial tuition costs until financial aid was received and paid for books and other related expenses.

The SDA is hoping to encourage more youth to attend postsecondary education through its New Horizons Academy. NHA participants will experience first hand what it is like to live on a college campus and will observe college classes in session.

Moving youth into an unsubsidized job that has a 'living' wage and benefits is an important goal of the Youth Start program. To achieve this goal, many Youth Start participants gain work experience through employment in a nonprofit or for-profit company. These youth learn basic skills and responsibilities in a safe work environment where employers serve as educators as well as supervisors. Youth can also use their Youth Start employers as future references. Yet gaining general work experience is only one component toward meeting this goal. The other critical component is for youth to gain experience in a job that is related to their career interests. As part of the customized nature of the Youth Start program, counselors place youth in subsidized tryout jobs where youth can explore their career interests. This should minimize job-hopping by youth and move them more quickly into a job that will benefit them over the long term. This is particularly important when there is a tight labor market where youth have many options for employment.

Role of Summer Component

The Saco CareerCenter does not run a separate Youth Start summer component. As noted earlier, youth are served throughout the year at this CareerCenter. Whether a youth's services are funded through the IIB or IIC program is just a matter of timing. For example, if a youth begins a subsidized job in May, the IIC program covers his wages. By July, his wages are funded through the IIB program. Summer 1999 was the last time that the Lewiston CareerCenter had a separate summer component. Beginning in 2000, all services for enrolled youth will be provided year-round. The same will occur at the other CareerCenters throughout the SDA.

Assessment of Service Integration

A Youth Start counselor at Saco credits the individualized nature of the program for its success. She suggests that even if Saco's budget increased, she believes that Youth Start would retain its structure of individualized guidance and customized services. The Saco staff added that moving to a full year-round program gave them more time to work with a youth to develop skills that will help him/her in the future. The program manager echoed this theme, noting that the year-round program permits "more thoughtful enrollments." That is, Youth Start counselors have more time to develop an appropriate job site that will hold the youth's interest while providing an opportunity to learn or enhance basic job skills. The move to an exclusive year-round program also changed the staff's views of Youth Start to that of a long-term rather than short-term intervention.

The Saco staff also noted that running a year-round program under WIA will be easier in terms of budgeting funds. Under JTPA, funds can only be tapped during certain times during the year. The counselors had to budget carefully so they would not run out of IIC funds before the IIB funds became available.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

As stated in Youth Start program materials, "effective youth programming requires community-wide partnerships." As a result, Youth Start staff maintain a variety of linkages with staff from a number of other programs and agencies. These linkages (1) improve the recruitment and referral of hard-to-serve youth, (2) promote the efficient delivery of local youth services, and (3) serve as a vehicle to exchange information regarding youth needs and current services available. Linkages are largely the result of individual Youth Start staff members initiating contacts with other agencies. Linkages are maintained through a variety of arrangements such as 2-way referrals between agencies, the co-location of services, individual meetings, and regularly scheduled group meetings. Although the SDA does not have MOUs with agencies currently in place, MOUs will be developed under WIA.

A common practice of Youth Start staff and staff from other agencies is 2-way referral. As noted earlier, Youth Start staff rely heavily on referrals from other social service agencies and community-based organizations to recruit youth. Youth Start staff, in turn, refer youth who come into the CareerCenter to other agencies or programs for services not available at the center. For example, staff from an adult education program will refer youth to the CareerCenter for employment opportunities, and Youth Start staff will refer youth to the adult education program for tutoring or other classes. Not only does this 2-way referral process assist with the recruitment of targeted youth, but it also promotes efficiency and avoids duplication in service delivery by increasing access to services outside of the CareerCenter.

Co-location of staff and services from other agencies at the CareerCenter is another way that Youth Start promotes an efficient delivery of local youth services. Most CareerCenters house staff from the Job Service and Rehabilitation programs as well as JTPA staff. In addition, out-stationed Job Corps admissions counselors are being scheduled at CareerCenters on a regular basis; some are even co-located permanently at CareerCenters. As a result, a youth can enter a CareerCenter and access a variety of employment and training services under one roof. The convenience of accessing many services at one location is particularly attractive given the transportation difficulties of youth in this rural SDA.

Youth Start staff meet frequently with staff from other programs and agencies to exchange information on the needs of local youth, existing youth programs, employer needs, and gaps in existing services. For example, staff from the Saco CareerCenter attend a monthly Educators Group meeting. The Educators Group consists of representatives from the county's education community including high schools, alternative schools, adult education programs, and vocational-technical schools. Frequent topics of discussion include the education and employment needs of youth.

An additional benefit of the program's various linkages is that the SDA and Youth Start staff can tap into resources and expertise from other programs when developing new Youth Start services. For example, the SDA wanted to include a community service component in the NHA experience. As a result, the SDA has been working with representatives from AmeriCorps/VISTA and the Maine

Conservation Corps to develop a weekend community service experience for NHA participants. Another linkage that was tapped for the NHA experience is that between the SDA and the University of New England, which has agreed to host the first Academy on its campus. The university will provide housing space and in-kind donations such as classroom space for the Academy. In addition, the SDA worked with the Maine Commission on Community Service to sponsor an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow who has developed the Youth Start mentoring program.

According to the SDA and local CareerCenter staff, factors important in the development of successful linkages are developing clear expectations about the interaction and realizing that it takes time to cultivate and maintain a strong relationship. As the SDA's program manager reports:

> We have found the most effective way to foster these relationships and working agreements is for the appropriate agencies' administrative offices to develop a general understanding of what they can expect by way of cooperation and service from each other. That understanding and expectations then need to be communicated to the local staff so they all know they have not only permission and support to collaborate, but also are expected to work collaboratively.

At the local level, the Youth Start staff emphasized the importance of face to face meetings to initiate a successful collaboration. One Youth Start counselor recommends against sending mass mailings to other agencies as a way of introducing these agencies to the Youth Start program and seeking their collaboration.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

The contractor staff at each CareerCenter is responsible for job development, placement, and post-placement followup for all enrolled youth. At the Saco Career Center, Youth Start counselors are responsible for job development, placement, and post-placement followup activities. The larger Lewiston CareerCenter has a dedicated job developer, and Youth Start counselors are responsible for placement and post-placement followup. At each center Youth Start counselors maintain active caseloads of approximately 30 youth year-round.

Job Development

Job development activities occur year-round. Throughout the years, the Youth Start staff have developed a pool of nonprofit and for-profit employers they can tap for work experience and tryout positions. These employers were primarily recruited through individual contacts by Youth Start staff. This was particularly the case at Saco. Current job recruitment activities focus on expanding the pool of employers to better match participants' career interests and informing employers new to the area about the Youth Start program.

The customized nature of the Youth Start program is again reflected in the steps that the job developer and counselors take to find an employer that meets the career interests of a particular youth. For example, a Youth Start counselor at Saco recalled a youth who was interested in skateboarding and bicycle repairs. The existing pool of Youth Start employers did not include any bicycle repair shops. Instead of encouraging the youth to work with another type of employer, the counselor researched information regarding local employers and approached two bicycle repair shops who then agreed to work with the program. The youth secured a position with one of the shops.

Youth Start staff also tap the resources of other employer-related organizations and agencies to learn about employers new to the area or to obtain more information about existing employers. For example, the Saco Youth Start staff noted that they take advantage of the co-location of the Job Service staff at their CareerCenter to learn more about local employers. Another example is the linkage between the Lewiston job developer and a local community development program. The community development program lends money to small and mid-size companies at low rates in exchange for a commitment from the employer to hire members of targeted groups in the community such as Youth Start participants. In addition to formal linkages, Youth Start staff at both CareerCenters attend meetings of organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce to keep informed about local employers and their employment and training needs.

Youth Start staff at both CareerCenters reported that a challenge of making the transition to a year-round program under WIA will be the employers' reaction. As Lewiston moves to a year-round program, there will not be a swell of youth available for summer employment. Instead, a more even distribution of youth will be employed throughout the year. Given the tight labor market, the Lewiston job developer does not anticipate problems finding year-round worksites. However, he and other Lewiston Youth Start staff expect that many local employers who have come to rely on the IIB program as a source of free labor will be upset by the reduction in the number of available summer youth. This is particularly likely among employers who are busiest during the summer. For example, the local parks and recreation department employs approximately 20 Youth Start participants in the summer. With a year-round program, it is likely that this department will receive substantially fewer Youth Start participants. The parks department will need to adjust to working with fewer subsidized employees.

The Saco staff recounted a similar reaction by their employers when they moved to a year-round program 3 years ago. While the Saco counselors spoke with employers individually about the transition, they suggested that group informational meetings would have been helpful.

Placement and Followup

Youth with little or no work experience are generally placed with a nonprofit organization to learn basic job skills. After a youth demonstrates improvement in work maturity and gains jobs skills, the youth will likely move to a tryout employment position with a for-profit organization. A youth with more work experience will typically be placed directly into a tryout position, skipping the basic job skills phase. However, like many other aspects of the Youth Start program, this placement approach is somewhat flexible. The Saco staff noted that they might place a youth with little work experience in a tryout site if the youth has transportation difficulties, and the tryout job is more accessible to the youth. Youth Start staff at both CareerCenters expressed a desire to place youth in jobs related to their career interests or at least in jobs that will help youth narrow their career interests. They do not want to place a youth in just any job because this may result in an unsatisfactory experience for both the youth and employer.

Youth Start counselors follow up with employers and youth at least weekly to monitor the youth's progress and discuss any problems. Once a participant's program experience has ended, Youth Start staff call the youth within 3 months to determine the youth's employment status and whether the youth is in need of any additional services. Telephone contact between the youth and counselor continues for one year; frequency and scope depend on the case. Longer term followup may take place. In fact, the Saco staff expects to have some sort of contact with a youth for up to 3 years. The first year is typically devoted to providing Tier III services to the youth. After that, former participants tend to visit at the CareerCenter off and on for additional non-Tier III services such as using the center's computers to update a resume and prepare cover letters and accessing the job banks to find another job. Past program participants will often stop by the CareerCenter or call the counselors to update the counselor about their activities.

OUTCOMES

Data from the SDA and reports from selected employers and participants indicate that the Youth Start program achieves a high rate of positive outcomes for youth. The SDA tracks program outcomes separately for IIB and IIC youth. Outcomes are generally categorized as positive or negative separations. A positive separation occurs when an enrolled youth exits Youth Start after completing his/her plan, whatever his/her goal may have been. Examples of positive separations include educational attainment, career goal identification, essential work competency attainment, postsecondary education enrollment, and employment.

Approximately one-quarter of PY 1999 IIB youth left Youth Start without completing their plans. Another third continued to receive Youth Start services under IIC funding. The remaining 41 percent of IIB youth had a positive separation. Although a high percentage of PY 1999 IIC youth (78 percent) were still receiving services at the time of our site visits in December 1999, nearly all IIC youth who had left Youth Start by that time had a positive outcome. Specifically, the preliminary IIC data for the first half of PY 1999 indicate that an estimated 93 percent of IIC youth who left Youth Start had a positive separation. Less than 10 IIC youth left the program without completing their plan.

More detailed outcome data indicate that the SDA is exceeding its performance standards. The SDA's performance standards are (1) to have 60 percent of participants enhance their employability, (2) to have 68 percent of participants enter unsubsidized employment, and (3) to have participants earn an average hourly wage of $6.25 at placement in an unsubsidized job. Employability enhancement includes returning or remaining in school, completing a major level of education, entering a non-Title II training program, attaining at least 2 job competencies (e.g., completion of work experience), or entering employment as well as completing one of the other activities. Preliminary data on IIC youth for PY 1999 indicate that an estimated 72 percent of participants with a positive separation entered employment, and their average hourly wage was $6.80. In addition, an estimated 63 percent of IIC youth with a positive separation enhanced their employability. Outcome rates were somewhat lower for IIB youth who had a positive separation. An estimated 68 percent of IIB youth enhanced their employability, and 7 percent entered employment. The average hourly wage at placement was $6.23. This low entered employment rate is attributable to the large percentage of IIB youth who returned to school.

The SDA and local Youth Start staff believe that program attrition occurs simply because of the nature of the population served. This particular age group is prone to move quickly out of town without leaving a forwarding address. The counselors may be in contact with the youth one week then the following week they can no longer be reached. Sometimes a youth will receive program services and then obtain a job on his/her own, and never inform their Youth Start counselor.

In general, the employers interviewed were pleased with their experience with the Youth Start program. The employers believed that the youth were gaining job skills and other experience that will help them become employed in the future. In addition, the employers felt that the performance of youth met their expectations.

All employers interviewed shared a common belief that if the youth they employ in tryout employment work hard and successfully complete their training period, the employers would seriously consider hiring them. Four out of the 5 employers interviewed have hired Youth Start participants. The fifth employer has not been with the program long enough to hire a youth but felt that hiring would occur in the future. A noteworthy example is the employer who owns an auto detailing and accessories company. Three years ago, he hired a Youth Start participant full-time. Over the years, the youth's responsibilities have grown. Currently, the youth is managing the store and serves as a role model and mentor to the employer's current Youth Start participants. Another employer hires a large number of youth for his seasonal business and feels the youth know they've achieved success when they get a call to work in the off-season. All employers planned to continue their participation in the Youth Start program and would like to hire more youth. One employer simply stated: "It's a great program."

All Youth Start participants interviewed gave the program high marks. The youth felt that the program gave them the skills, experience, and references needed to obtain other jobs in the future. In addition, the youth praised highly their interaction with the Youth Start staff. They noted that the counselors were "easy to talk to," "always available and willing to help," and gave them "good advice." One youth even commented that "working with the staff is the best part." Finally, all youth would recommend Youth Start to their friends.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The features of Youth Start that are most responsible for the successful integration of youth services on a year-round basis are: the role of the Youth Start counselor; comprehensive contracting and co-location of services; and open communication among service providers. Evidence from the case study suggests that the Youth Start counselor is the linchpin of the program. The counselor shoulders the responsibility for designing and coordinating a package of services tailored to an individual youth's needs. In addition to carrying out their case management responsibilities, counselors serve as advocates for youth, provide guidance, and serve as mentors and role models.

Comprehensive contracting and the co-location of staff and services from other agencies in CareerCenters have increased the efficiency of service delivery in this rural SDA. Youth Start counselors can easily tap the resources and staff from other JTPA programs and work with other programs housed in the CareerCenter to learn more about local employers and their employment requirements. CareerCenters are particularly effective in rural Maine where, according to the executive director, there is a particular "distress quotient," i.e., there are not many people, not many services, and individuals want to stay close to home. CareerCenters help to bring a range of employment and training services to the youth and adult communities under one roof.

The Youth Start staff maintain formal and informal lines of communication with a variety of youth specific and other agencies in the community. This eased the 2-way referral process, kept Youth Start staff informed about local employment and training needs, and kept the community abreast of changes in the Youth Start program.

The SDA and Saco staff believe that the integration of services and the year-round focus of the program have increased the quality of a participant's Youth Start experience. These 2 factors have broadened the services available to a youth and increased the amount of time to work with a youth and develop their skills. The Lewiston staff also expect benefits from working with a youth over a longer period of time. However, they have some reservations about how easy the transition to an exclusive year-round program will be. In particular, they believe that there will be a lot of effort involved with re-orienting employers to a year-round focus.

Overall, the Youth Start staff have drawn the following important lessons from their planning and operational experience:

- SDAs should prioritize youth needs. When faced with limited funding, the PIC and SDA staff determined that out-of-school youth had the greatest unmet needs. Rather than spreading resources thin by serving both in- and out-of-school youth, a decision was made to focus on out-of-school youth. As a result, the Youth Start staff have developed an expertise in working with out-of-school youth.

- Youth employment programs should leverage resources. In this largely rural area with limited funds, leveraging resources of other agencies and programs is a way to promote cost efficiency and improve access to services. The Youth Start staff recognize that they cannot meet all youth needs on their own.

- Program staff should "think outside of the box." The Youth Start staff has demonstrated the need to be creative and flexible when working with out-of-school youth. A degree of creativity and flexibility must exist in all aspects of the program, whether it is devising new program services such as the New Horizons Academy or thinking of new ways to reach and recruit potential participants.

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WORK FOR WORCESTER'S YOUTH
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Number of youth (summer 1999)	**1,800**
JTPA-eligible	**274**
Projected number of youth (summer 2000)	**2,000**
Demographic Characteristics:	
Gender:	
Male	**51%**
Female	**49%**
Race/Ethnicity:	
White	**51%**
African-American	**12%**
Hispanic	**26%**
American Indian or Alaskan Native	**11%**
Asian or Pacific Islander	**<1%**
Age:	
14-15	**39%**
16-17	**38%**
18-21	**23%**
Welfare and Other Benefits	
Free/Reduced Lunch	**52%**

All WWY participants (i.e., 100%) receive:

Employment work experience
Educational enrichment
Occupational skills training
Job readiness training
Possible high school credit

INTRODUCTION

Work for Worcester's Youth (WWY) is a summer employment program that offers work-based learning placements for youth ages 14-21, regardless of income status. It is an integral part of Worcester's school-to-career program administered by the Worcester Public Schools (WPS). All high school students in the WPS system enroll in a comprehensive sequence of core academics and electives in a career "pathway." Classroom instruction is accompanied by "hands-on" internships during the school year and summer work experience, under WWY, that provides job tasks that support the development of career competencies in the student's selected career pathway. The competencies are based on SCANS principles.

While the program is primarily targeted at in-school youth and is open to all public school students in Worcester, out-of-school youth are also eligible to participate. WWY is run by WPS in collaboration with a number of partners, including the Mayor's Office, the City of Worcester, the Central Massachusetts Regional Employment Board, and the Worcester Community Action Council.

WWY combines a variety of funding streams (e.g., JTPA, WPS, "Governor's Challenge Grant," "Governor's At-Risk funds," state-sponsored "Summer of Work and Learning Program") to support staffing and wages for this city-wide summer program. The private sector also contributes through the Student PLUS component of the program (discussed below). WWY's diverse funding base of restricted and nonrestricted funding streams provides the program with flexibility to "mix and match" students with job openings. Last year, 1,800 youth were enrolled in the WWY program. Of these, 274 youth were JTPA-eligible youth.

Youth can participate in the WWY program in one of two program tracks. The "Student PLUS" track places students in summer positions while "Work PLUS" is designed for students who have found a summer job on their own. In both cases, a work–based learning plan is developed jointly by the employer and the program to guide the work placement. The plan is designed to ensure that job tasks support the development of the SCANS competencies in the student's selected area of study that are being pursued during the school year. Students who meet certain requirements in "Student PLUS" or "Work PLUS" earn an elective credit in addition to their summer wages.

The WWY program is staffed entirely by WPS employees. With system-wide responsibility, the Program Coordinator works full-time, year round to oversee the program and identify internship opportunities for both the pathways program (i.e., during the school year) and for the WWY summer

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program. The coordinator meets with local employers to share information about the programs and discuss how the private sector can get involved. In addition to meeting with the School-to-Career (STC) team at each school on a monthly basis, the coordinator is in the schools almost every day, meeting with teachers and counselors to discuss the various internships that have been identified, review students' interests and needs, and match individuals to openings in their career pathway area. The Coordinator is also responsible for coordinating all aspects of the career fairs that are offered at each of the 7 schools.

In January, the program coordinator begins focusing on the summer program, posting personnel bulletins and marketing the program to the 1,800 companies in the local area. To assist in the coordination efforts, a lead teacher and a recruiter (who is typically a teacher or a counselor) are hired at each school. These WPS staff members are hired for 5 hours per week (during after-school hours), from late February until May, to recruit students at their school and assist in developing summer job opportunities. During the recruitment process, the program coordinator meets weekly with the lead teachers. To increase the amount of public sector involvement, the local SDA has provided "connecting activities" funds, which are used to pay 15 teachers to help recruit additional employers to participate in the summer program.

During the summer, approximately 70 WPS teachers and counselors (including the lead teachers and recruiters) are hired to work with the WWY program. Teachers and counselors who participate in the summer program meet with employers to develop learning plans and job descriptions for each student placed and provide on-site monitoring. The program coordinator works closely with the staff and the employers to coordinate all of the placements (1,800 last year) and oversee all aspects of the administration of the program.

While other programs and services are available to JTPA-eligible youth in Worcester, this report focuses on the WWY program and how it is integrated with school-year activities.

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

The City Manager's Office of Employment and Training serves as the SDA for the greater Worcester area. According to the Deputy Director, Massachusetts is moving slowly in implementing WIA. As of December 1999, the Governor had yet to establish his state board or submit a plan to DOL. Due to the delays at the state level, Worcester does not expect its Workforce Investment Board (WIB) to be in place until early spring. At that time, a youth council will be established. Membership on the youth council will likely be drawn in part from existing advisory committees of the PIC and the Governor's office, including one for youth and one focused on STC issues. A One-Stop service delivery system is expected to be in place in the year 2000.

The SDA estimates that its current JTPA enrollment mix includes 70 percent in-school youth and 30 percent out-of-school youth. How this mix may be affected by WIA was not clear at the time of our visit. The SDA did express concern, however, about the potential difficulty in recruiting out-of-school youth using the new WIA definition (i.e., youth not enrolled in an alternative school). The SDA had not yet developed a coordinated strategy to identify or serve such hard-to-reach youth.

As JTPA funding has been cut over the years, the public schools have played a larger role in preparing Worcester's workforce. While the Community Action Council was the primary contractor for youth services for many years, the public school system is now the driving force behind services for in-school youth. WPS has had many years of experience providing integrated school-to-career activities for in-school youth, including coordination of school-year internships and summer employment opportunities. WPS has worked closely with the Mayor's office to develop partnerships with every aspect of the public and private sector in order to provide funding and career resources for its students, regardless of their eligibility for JTPA/WIA. Of the 1,800 youth served by the WWY program last year, 274 (15 percent) were JTPA-eligible.

PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUTH STRATEGY

Without a WIB or youth council in place at the time of the visit, the process for developing a youth strategy was still to be determined. The local SDA was awaiting guidance from the state and hoped to begin the planning process in early spring. Members of existing advisory committees focused on youth issues will play a key role in developing the youth plan.

One of the key issues for the planning process will be the change in definition of "out-of-school" youth. SDA staff have raised concerns about finding and serving this hard-to-reach population. It is estimated that 10 percent of the WWY participants last year were out-of-school; however, this number includes youth enrolled in alternative schools. At this point, program staff report that they will continue to serve as many youth as possible, regardless of their school or income status.

Another major issue in the planning process will be the need to pool resources. As resources decrease, it is critical that various agencies and organizations work together toward a common goal of providing needed services for youth. Continued collaboration with the public school system is expected. Recognizing where agencies overlap in services and mission and where they don't will be important to articulate. This communication among partnering agencies will not only help to avoid duplication of services but will also help define the various roles and responsibilities among the collaborating agencies.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The WWY Program Coordinator works closely with the STC staff at each school throughout the year developing internship opportunities. Between March and April, recruitment for the summer program begins in earnest. Students are recruited for the WWY program primarily by the program coordinator and WPS teachers and counselors. Information about the program is provided through flyers, school announcements, word of mouth, videos, and presentations at the schools. To facilitate the recruitment process, each of the high schools has a designated staff member to coordinate the application process.

All students who are interested in the program complete an application form and an interview. To avoid the stigma associated with participation in an income-restricted program, all youth applying for WWY fill out the same paperwork (e.g., eligibility form). To further minimize the distinctions between those who are eligible for subsidized employment and those who are not, all youth placed by WWY receive the same wage. Further, the Worcester Community Action Council processes all paychecks regardless of the youth's funding source.

Once the applications and interviews are complete, the program coordinator meets with each pathway teacher to discuss each student's placement. When possible, placements connected to the youth's career pathway are made. Issues such as transportation needs are also considered in the placement process.

In the past, WWY has relied on free-lunch status to indicate JTPA eligibility. This indicator will no longer suffice under WIA, and staff with more expertise will be needed to determine eligibility for WIA funding. With the increased need for documentation, program staff no longer expect to complete the same paperwork for all applicants. Instead, the student database will likely be used to identify a limited number of students who appear to be WIA-eligible. Those students will then be asked to complete the necessary paperwork for income verification.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

As part of the pathways program, all WPS students complete the American College of Testing (ACT) Discover interest inventory prior to grade 11. The ACT Discover inventory is a computerized career exploration tool that takes 6 hours to complete. Each principal decides when the students will complete the inventory. In some cases, it is offered during English class because all students are required to take English. In some schools, for example the Accelerated Learning Laboratory (ALL) which serves students in grades pre-K through 12, ACT Discover is offered as part of an introductory course. The interest inventory is not intended to lead students to a career choice. Rather, it is intended to expose them to the many career choices available, help them to identify their skills and interest, and help them learn more about what it takes to be successful in different career areas.

All students enrolled in the WWY summer program complete the Interest Determination, Exploration and Assessment System (IDEAS). Students are presented with a list of activities related to various careers and asked to rate their interest in each activity using a 5-point scale (from "like the activity very much" to "dislike the activity very much"). The resulting profile helps students to identify their interests and match them to a wide variety of career options.

Efforts are made to match WWY placements with a student's career interests and skills. To ensure that each student's summer work-based experience is relevant to his/her schoolwork, as well as his/her career interests and skills, a learning plan is developed jointly by the employer and the teacher or Program Coordinator for each student (Attachment 1). The learning plan is organized around 9 competencies (adapted from SCANS) that identify the skills needed to succeed in higher education and the world of work. Competencies are grouped into three categories:

I. Individual
  - Communication and literacy
  - Organizing and analyzing information
  - Problem solving
  - Using technology
  - Completing entire activities

II. Team
  - Acting professionally
  - Interacting with others
  - Understanding all aspects of the industry

III. Personal and Professional Development
  - Taking responsibility for career and life choices

The teacher or WWY program coordinator works closely with the employer prior to the placement to identify specific objectives, tasks, and/or projects that the student must accomplish at work to meet the corresponding competencies. The learning plan then serves as the tool to guide the summer work experience. Students are evaluated on their performance in each of the specified areas by the worksite supervisor.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Although WWY is a summer program, it is very closely integrated with the School-to-Career activities in which students participate during the school year. To better understand this year-round connection, an overview of the "pathways" program being implemented in the Worcester public schools is provided below. It is in the context of these STC activities that the WWY program operates.

"Pathways to Success"

WPS is the second largest school system in New England, with 25,518 students. Over 50 percent of the student population is economically disadvantaged and receive free or reduced price lunch. Approximately 46 percent of the students are minorities. The WPS system has established a policy in conjunction with Massachusetts Higher Ed Reform that restructures secondary schooling, "so that every student is prepared for college, careers, and lifelong learning." The core in this restructuring is the Pathways Program. Introductory courses and exploratory courses are offered in the 9th and 10th grades. A variety of career pathways are available for students to choose from, including computer sciences; engineering, technology, and communications; human services; health sciences; business information, marketing, and finance; law and government; performing and visual arts; and horticulture. There is also an advanced academics pathway. These majors were chosen based on an analysis of the local labor market demand as well as the Regional Employment Board's (i.e., the local area's PIC) Blueprint for Economic Development, majors already existing at each comprehensive high school, and input from business partners.

The pathway program is designed to provide students with systematic exposure to various career areas. As students pass through grades 9-12, they are building a portfolio of experiences which include courses, short non-paid internships, paid internships, and summer work experiences that lead to possible career choices. By the 11th grade, each student must select a pathway. In grades 11 and 12, students take 4 core courses (e.g., math, history) and 2 electives, one of which must be in their career pathway.

In the 12th grade, the daily schedule includes a double period (typically at the end of the day) in the student's major career area. This provides youth with the opportunity to participate in an internship during these class periods. Employability skills training is provided throughout the school year by Jobs for Baystate, which has been contracted to provide a 4-class courseload in each of the high schools, serving approximately 40-50 students at each location.

Beginning in the second quarter, 10-week "hands-on" internships are offered to students who have met minimum attendance requirements, have basic academic skills, and are on track to graduate. Students who are unavailable to go on internship in the second quarter due to scheduling conflicts (e.g., athletes) can go out in the third quarter. Students who did well on their internship in the second quarter are also eligible to go out again in the third quarter. Approximately 650 seniors (about 50 percent) are expected to go on internship this year.

Students go to their internship assignments for 2 hours each day, Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, the students meet with their teacher and/or worksite supervisor during the double-block period to integrate their academic work with their career learning. Activities may include reflective journal writing, small group discussions about insights gained from interviews the youth have conducted with their employers and others in the field, or essays related to specific career areas. The teacher may also use this time to address work readiness skills.

Pathway teachers visit the job sites and monitor student performance and experience. Site supervisors are in charge of the worksite and assign duties for the students. The learning plan, developed jointly by the teacher and the worksite supervisor, is the basis for determining what skills or experience each student is expected to gain from a particular placement. Both the site supervisor and the teacher review the learning plan and make comments on the student's progress. During the internship, students are expected to conduct 2 interviews with individuals in the field to learn more about what it takes to be successful in that career area. While the internships are typically unpaid, some employers have chosen to pay their interns. In other cases, employers hire the students to work for them after their internship hours (e.g., from 2:00 - 5:00 pm).

In some schools, students are offered a slightly different internship experience. For example, students attending the Accelerated Learning Laboratory (ALL) have an opportunity to participate in up to 15 short-term internships over the course of their high school careers. This program is designed to expose youth to the many opportunities that exist in the world of work. Before going on their first internship, students participate in a Success Skills/Internship training program. Each Friday, the 9th grade students rotate through 4 45-minute rotations, including: (1) a Success Skills class taught by volunteers from the business community, (2) a class on How to Prepare for an Internship, (3) ACT Discover computerized interest inventory, and (4) technology education. Following the training, students are eligible to go out on internship. Students who are not deemed ready may be assigned to an in-house internship. Students participate in 3 10-week internships in the 9th grade and 4 internships each year in grades 10 through 12. Students who have participated in this program report that the internship experience has taught them about responsibility, how to dress appropriately, and how to be more professional. Employers who have participated in the ALL internship program report that the students have exceeded their expectations. In some instances, internships have led to part-time or summer jobs.

Another unique internship opportunity is offered to students in the Health Science Academy at North High School. In a collaborative effort between the University of Massachusetts Medical Center (the area's largest employer, with over 8,000 jobs) and the WPS, internship placements are available to seniors participating in this intensive health sciences pathway. Student placements cover a broad range of departments/areas, including surgery, emergency medicine, patient transport, radiology, sports medicine, finance, groundskeeping, food service, billing, pathology lab, animal research, and admissions. The internship lasts 20 weeks, with students working at the Medical Center from 9:15 - 11:15 am, Monday through Thursday. Friday mornings are spent in class discussing subjects such as patient confidentiality, health insurance, or work ethics. Students are transported to and from the medical center on a bus provided by the school.

Students participating in this internship program were excited about their experiences. Many commented on the value of a "hands-on" experience, which they felt taught them more than they could have ever learned from a textbook. For example, one student assigned to the animal research department said that her experience assisting during surgery (e.g., kidney transplant research using pigs) taught her more about anatomy than she had learned in school. Another student assigned to the cardiac surgery department also reported that her first-hand observations in the operating room were very informative and could not compare with pictures in a textbook. Students also reported learning about responsibility, teamwork, and how to act in a work environment as a result of participating in this internship. In some cases, students reported that their internship experience strengthened their interest in the field, while others reported that their hands-on experience helped them realize that this was not the career area they want to go into. Since the program is designed to be a career exploration opportunity, program staff consider ruling out a particular career choice to be just as important as choosing one.

WPS has worked hard to integrate industry standards into its pathway programs. In fact, certificates of mastery have been developed for 3 of the programs—early childhood education, business information systems, and food services. Students who complete the early childhood program will be certified by the state as an early childhood educator since the competencies required have been built into the curriculum. Similarly, the business information systems program has been designed to prepare students to be certified on Microsoft Office applications, which they can do at school because WPS is a licensed testing site. In addition to the certificates already developed, WPS is working on 2 more—graphics and computer-aided design (CAD). In addition to certificates of mastery, WPS has also established articulation agreements with some of the postsecondary institutions in the area (e.g., Quinsigamond Community College (QCC)), which allow students to earn college credits for classes taken in high school.

Work for Worcester's Youth

The WWY program is not really a separate program but rather is an integral part of the School-to-Career activities being implemented in the Worcester public schools. Youth can participate in the WWY program in one of 2 program tracks. The "Student PLUS" track places students in summer positions, while "Work PLUS" is designed for students who have found a summer job on their own. In both cases, a work–based learning plan is developed jointly by the employer and the program to guide the work placement. The plan is designed to ensure that job tasks support the development of the career competencies in the student's selected career pathway. The WWY program recently introduced a third way for employers to get involved in the program. Through the "Sponsor PLUS" program, employers who would like to participate in the program but do not have any summer positions available can contribute $1,000 to fund the placement of a student at another worksite in Worcester.

Student PLUS. Last year, 56 percent of the WWY participants were enrolled in the Student PLUS program. Youth who participate in this program track are placed by WPS in summer job openings. Every effort is made to place students in a work experience that is related to their selected pathway. For example, students from the early childhood program are often placed as recreational aides in the public parks program. Placements are also determined in part by the funding source for each student, with JTPA-funded youth placed exclusively in public-sector openings.

Prior to each placement, the teacher or program coordinator meets with the worksite supervisor to develop a work-based learning plan for each student. The learning plan not only ensures that the students' summer work experience is related to their classroom objectives and career interests and competencies (as identified on their interest inventories), but it also allows the students and the employer to clearly see what is expected of them. Teachers and counselors recruited from the schools provide daily supervision on-site and monitor the work experiences of youth.

Students in "brokered" positions (i.e., those found by WPS) are paid $5.50 per hour for 25 hours per week (5 hours per day, 5 days per week). In addition to their wages, students earn school credit for their summer work experience. Employers have the option of hiring the students for additional hours (e.g., beyond the 5-week summer placement or more than 5 hours each day) at their own expense. Youth who are hired by the city as lifeguards and recreational aides in the public parks and pool program work longer hours and are paid slightly higher wages.

During the 5-week summer position, students complete a summer work competency portfolio. The portfolio includes a series of reflective exercises, including an interview the youth must complete with his/her employer. The interview is designed to help the student learn more about what the employer's job responsibilities are, what education is needed to be successful in their position, what they like and dislike about their job, and what the typical starting salary is for an entry-level position in that field. Students also complete a series of journal entries about their job responsibilities, what they like and dislike about their summer work experience, and what their experience has taught them about the job and about themselves. Assignments from The Job Hunting Handbook (e.g., "Creating a Good Impression," "Ace the Interview," "Create a Resume that Employers will Read") are also incorporated into the portfolio. One hour is set aside each day to work on the portfolio.

Students enrolled in the Student PLUS program participate in a day of career and college exploration on the QCC campus. This outing was offered on 2 separate occasions this past summer, with a total of 800 students participating. The day begins with a scavenger hunt where students work in small teams to search for 40 pieces of information across the campus (e.g., the name of the college president, how much french fries cost at the student center, the number of different kinds of equipment in the gym). Each team meets with their assigned teacher/leader to devise a strategy, and then most break into sub-teams, scattering all over the campus looking for answers. Not only is this a recreational activity, but it also provides the students with an up-close look at how the college works. Reportedly this is the first opportunity for many students to be on a college campus.

In addition to the scavenger hunt, students hear from a series of college faculty and staff on issues such as admissions, registration, and financial aid. Students also attend an in-depth presentation on a career/major of their choice to learn more about that field and its educational prerequisites. Over 35 QCC faculty and staff participate in this daylong event.

WWY has developed some innovative incentive programs to aid in recruiting new employers and to encourage current employers to add more summer positions. WPS offers employers a one-to-one match for each student hired under the Student PLUS program. For each student they hire at $5.50 per hour, WPS will provide another youth at no cost to the employer. These youth are also paid $5.50 per hour but from program funds. Further, if the employer hires 5 students, WPS will provide a full-time teacher to be on-site in addition to the 5 matching youth. If fewer than 5 students are hired, a teacher is provided part-time. Last year, 300 employers participated in the "matching" program.

The University of Massachusetts Medical Center (UMMC), which consists of the medical school, research facilities, and a teaching hospital, is one of many local employers who have participated in the WWY summer program for several years. As a public institution, UMMC Center offers 50 summer positions for JTPA-eligible youth. Students from different pathway areas (e.g., health sciences, information technology, and culinary arts) are teamed with staff members in many of the 200 career areas offered at the Medical Center. The program is coordinated at UMass by the Director of Science Education, a faculty member of the Medical Center. Working closely with the WWY Program Coordinator and the WPS faculty assigned to that internship site, the UMass coordinator is responsible for securing the cooperation of his colleagues throughout UMMC and identifying internship opportunities, providing an orientation to students and faculty participating in the program, and monitoring the overall operation of the students' summer work experience.

Unlike the school-year internship program operated by North High School, summer students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the Medical Center. Before beginning their summer placements, all 50 students assigned to the Medical Center must have a physical exam and receive a TB shot. This very substantial undertaking is coordinated by 2 WPS staff members from North High School (a teacher and a career counselor) who have been assigned to oversee the program for several years.

According to the coordinator, the summer internship program has been very successful. In most cases, students have met the Center's expectations. In fact, 10 students from last summer's group were hired part-time by the Medical Center to continue their work during the school year. They would have liked to hire more of the youth; however, budgets were limited. The success of the UMass summer program is attributed in part to the availability of a faculty member from the institution, rather than an administrative staff person, to coordinate the program. Reportedly, faculty members have better access to the various departments throughout the Medical Center and are able to secure the cooperation and involvement of their colleagues better than an administrative staff member could.

The Judicial Youth Corps is another placement opportunity that links the summer work experience with school-year activities. In collaboration with the law firm Bowditch and Dewey and the Worcester County Bar Association, 10 students from the "Law and Government" pathway are paired with an instructor and work in the state judicial system. The youth are placed in a variety of career areas, including trial court, probation, and administration. Field trips are conducted throughout the state, including one to the State Supreme Court. Students are expected to come away from the program with an overall understanding of the entire state judicial process and have a better basis for deciding if they want to have a career in law or law enforcement. Students who had participated in this program described the experience as giving them a realistic view of how the judicial system works, which is very different from what it might appear to be based on the media. Future plans calls for expanding the program beyond Worcester City boundaries.

Work PLUS. The Work PLUS program is designed for in-school or out-of-school youth who are returning to a regular summer job or who have found a summer job on their own. This program allows youth to earn school credit for their work experience by following a work-based learning plan (developed jointly by the teacher and the worksite supervisor) and completing a student portfolio. Youth in the Work PLUS program must conduct and document 2 employer interviews and complete 6 of 12 journal entries (e.g., "What skills have you learned in school that help you in your job?" "What skills have you learned on your worksite?" "What qualities do you feel good leaders possess?" "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?"). Attendance must also be excellent for credit to be awarded. The supervising teacher takes care of the necessary paperwork to earn credit. Students earn an elective credit for meeting these requirements in the summer program.

Similar to the Student PLUS program, youth enrolled in the Work PLUS program work 25 hours per week for 5 weeks; however their wages are not set at $5.50 per hour. Instead, private employers determine the hourly wage to be paid. Last year, 800 youth participated in the Work PLUS program.

ROLE OF CONTRACTORS/PROGRAM STAFF IN INTEGRATED PROGRAM

WPS works closely with several partners, particularly private sector employers, to implement the WWY summer program. While WPS teachers and career counselors provide on-site monitoring, worksite supervisors are provided in-kind by the employers. Other services for the summer and school-year programs are contracted out.

The Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC), a long-term provider of JTPA services, serves as the fiscal agent for the WWY program. WCAC is responsible for handling the payroll for all Student PLUS participants, regardless of their funding source. To accomplish this, WCAC has developed a comprehensive data management system that allows them to distinguish more than 150 different job sites and various funding sources. In addition to serving as the fiscal agent for the WWY program, WCAC also works closely with WPS to conduct the intake process, going into the schools to complete the intake forms, gather the necessary documents from the students (e.g., emergency release form, work permit, or copy of a Social Security card), administer the IDEAS inventory, and develop an individual service strategy (ISS).

QCC is also contracted during the summer months to provide 2 1-day career exploration activities for Student PLUS participants. WPS funds are used primarily to cover the cost of the college faculty who participate in the event. QCC provides all of the materials and the support staff in-kind.

During the school year, Jobs for Baystate is contracted to provide employability skills training classes. They also provide job site monitoring in situations when teachers are unable to. For example, when some students in a class do not go on internship for one reason or another (e.g., not academically prepared, new to the pathway, making up core requirements), the teacher will stay behind in the classroom while Jobs for Baystate goes on-site to monitor the students out on internship.

ASSESSMENT OF SERVICE INTEGRATION

WPS has worked with many partners to develop and implement a successful integrated program for in-school and out-of-school youth. Their success is attributed in part to the willingness of the various agencies and organizations involved to work together toward a common goal. This approach has required a certain level of trust among the parties.

The strong political leadership of the mayor and the involvement of the private sector have also played a key role in the continuing success of the program. The mayor has been a major force behind the WWY program, from his early efforts arguing for a budget increase for the program before the Worcester School Committee (which he chairs) to his ongoing goal to serve more youth than the year before.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

WPS is able to provide so many opportunities for internship and work experience because of the broad base of support it has established for its programs throughout the community. The school system plays a pivotal role in preparing Worcester's workforce through its pathways program and its coordination of the WWY summer program. WPS provides the infrastructure and the day-to-day personnel to operate an integrated program of work-based experience and classroom instruction. WPS teachers provide classroom instruction, recruit employers for school-year internships and summer placements, recruit students to participate in the programs, and monitor their on-site experiences.

WPS works closely with the Mayor's Office, the City of Worcester, the local Chamber of Commerce, the business community in general, the WCAC, and the Regional Employment Board to offer integrated career services to youth. WPS also works closely with various colleges in the local area (e.g., Quinsigamond) to provide youth with opportunities for postsecondary education (e.g., articulation agreements to earn college credit for high school courses).

Strong linkages to the private sector have been critical to the success of the WWY program. Program staff report that the one-to-one match offered in the Student PLUS program has been a successful incentive for increased employer involvement. Positive experiences working with the youth have also led to continued involvement of some employers in both the school-year internships and the summer program.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

WPS staff are responsible for identifying possible internships and summer placements. The WWY Program Coordinator spends a considerable amount of time throughout the year visiting local employers. During her meetings she provides an overview of the program, shares labor market information, and discusses how they can get involved in either the school-year program or the summer program, or both. WPS teachers also play a role in recruiting local employers. "Connecting Activities" funds provided by the SDA allow teachers to go out from March through May to set up work-experience opportunities. This year, teachers conducted neighborhood sweeps as part of their "Hitting the Streets!" effort to recruit small family-owned establishments. No employer is considered too small to participate.

Other job development activities this past year included a mass mailing of letters and brochures with followup telephone calls, a Chamber of Commerce breakfast for 200-300 employers, a presentation at a Rotary Club luncheon, and announcements on local television stations (e.g., the Channel 4 News "Community Calendar" listings).

OUTCOMES

The WWY program has experienced tremendous growth since it was first piloted in 1994. Enrollment has increased from 100 participants in 1995 to 500 in 1996, 1,000 in 1997, 1,500 in 1998, and 1,800 in 1999. Next summer, WWY hopes to serve 2,000 youth.

In an effort to evaluate the impact of the WWY program, WPS conducted a followup survey of 627 students in December 1998. Student performance data before and after participation in the program were also compared. Feedback from youth, teachers, and employers was very positive. Not only did students report that they liked working in the program (97 percent), they also reported learning work habits important to being successful (87 percent) and making a positive contribution to the business/agency (87 percent). More than 95 percent of employers and teachers agreed that the students learned important work habits and made positive contributions to the businesses/agencies they were placed in. There was also strong agreement that the program had a positive effect on the students.

According to WPS, the WWY program has had a noticeable impact on student performance. Comparison data indicate that attendance rates improved for students in the program—there was a 26 percent reduction in the number of absences and a 280 percent increase in the number of students with perfect attendance. Changes were also seen in course selection, with more students selecting upper level classes. Academic performance also improved. Thirty-five percent of the students improved in English, 37 percent improved in math (with 27 percent more A's), and 74 percent got a higher grade in their pathway.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

WPS has gained local and statewide recognition as an outstanding urban public school system. Its strong School-to-Career approach, particularly the pathways program, provides students with a comprehensive program of study with challenging academic content and career exploration and development activities. Work-based learning activities, including internships during the school year and intensive summer learning experiences, provide students with an opportunity to see the world of work first-hand. The WWY program creates opportunities for students to apply academic principles and learn skills that are needed in the workplace; employers benefit by developing highly skilled workers and thereby increase the pool of qualified applicants for future job openings. The program also opens the door for the entire community to participate in education and shapes the future workforce.

The WWY program is an example of how the public and private sector can work together to provide work-based learning experiences for both in-school and out-of-school youth. WPS has been successful in leveraging a variety of funding sources to serve youth, regardless of their income status. The strong political support of the Mayor, the willingness of agencies to work together toward a common goal, and the strong involvement of local employers have been critical to the success of this program. It is unclear what effect WIA will have on the WWY program. What is clear is Worcester's plan to expand the WWY program and continue to serve more youth.

Program staff offer the following "lessons learned" from operating these integrated programs:

- It is important to avoid the stigma associated with participation in a categorically funded (i.e., income-restricted) program. Several steps can be taken to minimize the distinctions between participants eligible for subsidized employment and those who are not, including standard paperwork and set wages for all applicants.

- As resources decrease, it is critical that agencies and organizations work together toward a common goal of providing needed services for youth. Collaboration and communication are keys to success. Recognizing where agencies overlap in services and mission and where they don't is important to articulate to avoid duplication of services and help define the various roles and responsibilities among the partners.

- Employer incentives (e.g., one-to-one match, on-site teacher supervision) have worked well in increasing private sector involvement in the summer program.

- Every effort should be made to find summer work experience opportunities related to the student's career interests and abilities; the WWY program is not designed to simply find youth summer jobs. The learning plan, developed jointly by the teacher and the employer, is a good tool to connect the skills the student is learning on the job to what is being taught in school. Integrating industry standards into the school curriculum and the summer learning plan is also important.

- When a program is designed to encourage career exploration, ruling out a particular career choice is just as important as choosing one. A student's decision to change his/her career area after having an opportunity for hands-on work experience should be considered a positive outcome rather than a negative one.

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EAGLE ENTERPRISES
EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Number of in-school youth:	
60 in the summer program	
12 in the 10-month supportive employment Work-Study program	
80 in the school-year school-run businesses	
Characteristics of in-school enrollees:	
Gender:	
Male	50%
Female	50%
Race/ethnicity:	
White	50%
African-American	30%
Hispanic	15%
Other	5%
Age:	
14-15	50%
16-17	40%
18 or older	10%
Family receives welfare/other benefits	60% (est.)
Services provided to in-school youth	
Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction	100%
Alternative secondary school offerings	5%
Summer employment opportunities	40%
Paid and unpaid work experience	100%
Occupational skills training	100%
Supportive services	10%
Adult mentoring	variable
Guidance and counseling	100%
Job search and placement assistance	100%
Summer component services provided to in-school youth	
Any summer services at all	50%
Of those receiving summer services	
Employment/work experience	100%
Educational remediation	100%
Job readiness training	100%
Outcomes for in-school youth	
Completion rate	95%
Positive outcome rate	90%

INTRODUCTION

The Eagle Enterprise Program is a school/private industry collaborative formed to help secondary special education students in the school-to-career transition process through skill development in school-based entrepreneurial activities. The Egg Harbor Township School District (New Jersey) has been operating the Eagle Enterprise Program since 1988. The program has 3 components: a Summer Youth Employment and Training program, a Supportive Employment Work-Study Program, and three school-based businesses which offer work experience as a class credit for students. This program has a long history of integrating summer and school year employment and training experiences for in-school youth.

Eagle Enterprises has been very successful working with a population that faces special barriers to employment—special education students with physical and/or learning disabilities. The program utilizes a graduated system of workplace responsibilities to teach students about the world of work and help them develop good work habits. The program is designed to provide these special education youth with work experience that, at each stage—beginning with entry via the summer program, followed by school business employment and work study, and culminating eventually in unsubsidized employment—provides the youth with progressively more responsibility and less direct supervision from program staff. The program serves students from the summer following their 8th grade school year until graduation from high school, enabling the program to teach and to help students develop job skills over a period of years. Egg Harbor Township High School has approximately 1,400 students, 238 of whom are classified as special education.

Three special education teachers teach and supervise students working in the 3 in-school businesses. One of these teachers also serves as the special needs job coordinator and oversees both the summer program and the Work-Study program. His salary is paid by the school district and JTPA. He has been a part of the summer program since its second summer and has been involved in Eagle Enterprises' in-school businesses from the beginning. Other teachers' salaries are supported by the school district during the year and by Carl Perkins funds for the summer program. All 3 Eagle Enterprise

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programs, including the summer program, operate out of the Egg Harbor Township High School, and the school district has considerable autonomy in designing and operating the programs.

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

The Egg Harbor Township School District is located within the Atlantic/Cape May Township SDA. The SDA serves 2 counties and 43 separate school districts. Only 6 individual schools, however, participate in the various jobs programs offered by the SDA, including the Eagle Enterprise Program. Three hundred twenty-six in-school and out-of-school youth participated in the SDA's JTPA jobs programs during the 1998-99 school year, and approximately 1200 youth participate each summer. The Eagle Enterprise Program serves only a small number of the many young people who benefit from the various jobs programs offered by the SDA.

Presently the Atlantic/Cape May Township SDA, which has provided JTPA funding for the Eagle Enterprise Program, is in the beginning stages of implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The main issue facing the SDA at this point is the selection of an administrative entity to implement WIA policy and programming. At the time of our visit in December 1999, the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) had been established, but it had not determined whether the Private Industry Council (PIC), a non-profit organization called the Job Connection, would be selected as the lead implementing agency for the WIB or whether this contract would be awarded to another organization, such as the local Employment Service or the local community college. Until this decision is made, definitive plans indicating how WIA will be implemented in the area cannot be made.

Under JTPA, the PIC's Title IIB/C program has primarily served in-school youth. Out-of-school youth have proven difficult to serve, due in large part to the strong local economy and availability of well-paying entry-level jobs within the Atlantic City casino industry. The PIC president reported that it was difficult to convince out-of-school youth that they needed to upgrade their skills and further their education when they could get entry-level jobs that paid $8 to $10 per hour—much more than the minimum wage offered by the PIC's employment and training programs. The PIC president acknowledges that under WIA a larger percentage of resources will need to be expended on out-of-school youth. However, competition from the strong local economy makes recruiting and serving these youth a challenging proposition. Under JTPA, the summer employment and training program has been allocated the majority of resources—with Title IIB programming receiving 6 times as much money as Title IIC programs. The new funding allocation under WIA will give local programs more flexibility, but how decisions will be made about how to allocate funds has yet to be determined.

The WIB has started to organize a youth council, and 19 members have been recruited. The members include representatives from faith-based organizations, JTPA, TANF, the juvenile justice system, the local housing authority, community-based organizations, and the education community. The WIB plans for the complete board to include 40 to 45 members. At the date of our visit, the present members of the youth council had met twice to discuss preliminary matters, but they were not far enough along to begin discussions on an overall youth strategy. However, the Egg Harbor Township School District has operated an integrated school-to-work program for 10 years that is consistent with many WIA objectives and provides some valuable lessons for other communities in determining how to combine summer and school-year services into an integrated, year-round program. The remainder of this profile focuses on the Eagle Enterprise program.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Recruitment and selection approaches for this program vary depending on whether the youth enters through the summer program. Many students become involved in the program in the summer following 8th grade. In April, program staff conduct presentations for special education 8th graders at the middle school that feeds into Egg Harbor Township High School. These students are referred by their school counselors/case managers. Applications are distributed to interested students, and participants are selected on a first-come-first-served basis. Thirty slots (of 60) in the summer program are allocated for 8th graders. In addition to the 8th grade students, other participants in the summer program are recruited through announcements at the high school and by word of mouth. For the summer program, 15 economically disadvantaged youth, in addition to the special education students, are encouraged to apply and participate.

The 8th grade summer employment program is used as a springboard for the other components of the program. Once special education students are drawn into the program through the summer component, the Eagle Enterprises staff are able to identify those students whom they think will benefit from other components of the program. Working with students' school counselors/case managers, participants are encouraged to enroll in the school-based businesses during the school year. Later, in the student's 11th and 12th grade year, students may be referred by Eagle Enterprises staff, other teachers, and their counselor to the Work-Study program, which provides paid work experience for half of each school day.

The participants in the Eagle Enterprise program, however, are not limited to students who enter through the summer program. Until this year, recruitment sessions for the school-based businesses took place in the high school during special education English classes. Presently, special education students have been incorporated into regular English classes, and, therefore, it is not possible to conduct recruitment in this manner. Instead, counselors/case managers and teachers identify students whom they believe could benefit from the program. Then, the school's learning disabilities counselor can suggest to these students that they consider the school-based businesses when constructing their schedules for the following semester. In their 11th and 12th grade year, the students can discuss with the school counselor their options for the Work-Study component when designing their schedules for the next semester.

The program staff has not experienced any significant problems with recruitment. Generally there is no shortage of participants, according to the special needs job coordinator, and the program consistently receives more applications than it can accept. The coordinator follows a philosophy that every child deserves a chance, so there are no basic requirements to be selected for entry into the program. Students are accepted until there are no more slots left to fill. Since this process has been successful for a number of years, there are no plans to change it with the phasing in of WIA.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

Each special education student has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) that is developed by a Youth Study Team consisting of a school psychologist, a learning disabilities teacher/consultant, and a school social worker. This group meets annually with the student's parents to discuss the IEP. Each student is assigned a case manager from within this group who monitors the student's academic progress. The case managers make extensive use of the Eagle Enterprise program offerings as part of the IEP, particularly to meet requirements that all special education students have a school-to-work transition program. Each of Eagle Enterprise's components—the Summer Youth Employment and Training

Program, the Supportive Employment Work-Study Program, and the three school-based businesses—may be drawn upon and tailored, as appropriate, in the youth's IEP.

SERVICES PROVIDED

The Eagle Enterprise Program consists of 3 distinct components: a Summer Youth Employment and Training component that serves 60 special education and disadvantaged youth in a 6-week summer program, a 10-month Supportive Employment Work-Study Program that provides subsidized work experience to 12 special education students throughout the school year, and 3 school-based businesses that provide work experience to approximately 80 special education students annually for which they receive class credit. JTPA funding is used to support the first 2 components, while the school-based businesses are totally self-sustaining from profits generated from the businesses and the support of local firms.

The Summer Youth Employment and Training Program provides academic classes, supervised work experience, and enrichment trips to 45 special education students and 15 economically disadvantaged youth who are not classified as special education. Thirty slots are allocated for special education students who are moving from 8th grade into high school to help facilitate this transition. The academic program is taught by 4 certified teachers and 3 teacher's aides. Students discuss their on-the-job experiences in group sessions designed to teach the students communication skills, problem solving, career awareness, job-seeking techniques, self-assessment, and career decision making. Instructional classes cover computer-generated resume writing, interviewing techniques, employment and consumer-related math, and job acquisition skills. Students work 5 hours per day Tuesdays through Thursdays at local non-profit or governmental organizations as secretarial aides, custodial aides, maintenance aides, public works aides, recreation counselors, grounds workers, food bank warehouse workers, teacher's aides, or food service workers. Some students build bagel carts that are donated to other schools to help teach their students entrepreneurial skills. On Fridays, students participate in enrichment trips to such destinations as the Baltimore Inner Harbor, Franklin Institute, and Raging Waters/Wildwood. The summer program coordinator maintains close contact with all worksites and is ready to address any problems that arise.

The Eagle Enterprise Supportive Work-Study Program places 11th and 12th grade students in subsidized jobs within the school district to serve as elementary school teacher's aides, secretarial aides, food service/cafeteria workers, assistant managers of the school store, or proprietors of Bagel Express Carts which are placed in the district's outlying school buildings to sell bagels and coffee to teachers and staff. The students work at their job for 3 hours per day, 5 days per week during the school year, receive compensation at the minimum wage, and receive 15 credits toward graduation. The students also participate in a daily class that covers career development, business operations, job-seeking and interview activities and also seeks to provide remediation of academic deficiencies. The remainder of the students' day includes 4 regular academic courses. In the spring, these students participate in job shadowing in an area of personal interest to provide them with further education in career opportunities. The Work-Study program is managed by a certified special education instructor who is also the special needs job coordinator.

The 3 school-based businesses of Eagle Enterprise are BIZ's Bagels, the Eagle Greenery, and the Eagle's Nest School Store. Eighty students work in one of the 3 businesses for one class period, for which they receive academic credit. In BIZ's Bagels, students prepare and sell bagels, coffee, tea, and other beverages to teachers and staff within the Egg Harbor Township High School. BIZ's Bagels provides the most structured work environment, and students who work there are typically freshmen or sophomores.

The Eagle Greenery is a floral shop where students make floral arrangements, bouquets, and corsages for individual sales to students and staff and make special arrangements for in-school and outside events such as weddings, birthdays, and proms. Students also do outside landscaping and work in the school greenhouse. The Eagle's Nest School Store contains a variety of merchandise, from school sweatshirts and notebooks to cookies and special occasion balloons that the students sell to other students, teachers, and staff. Students learn cash register operation, customer service, inventory control, security control, completing bank deposits/sales slips/receipts, merchandising, sales marketing, computer spreadsheets, and telephone, fax and email correspondence. Students must be juniors or seniors to work in the School Store. Each of the 3 in-school businesses is supervised by a certified special education teacher who instructs the students in the various aspects of the business and works with them to learn positive work habits necessary for any entry-level job.

The number of youth enrolled in each of the 3 components is not anticipated to change in the next year. The special needs job coordinator feels that the program is at capacity given the current levels of staffing and the size of the businesses operating within the school. All of the students who participate in the Eagle Enterprise program receive skills training and instruction to encourage school completion, paid or unpaid work experience, occupational skills training, guidance, and counseling. Students in the Work-Study program also receive job search and placement assistance, including job shadowing, and transportation to their worksites. About 40 percent of the youth in Eagle Enterprises participate in the summer program that combines structured work experience with job-readiness training. Students are mentored on an informal basis by their supervisors at their job sites, within and outside the school.

Students who participate in the summer program may or may not be involved in the in-school businesses during the school year. There is typically fluidity in students' participation during the in-school components as well. A student may work at the bagel shop as a freshman, not participate the following year, and then join again in his/her junior year. However, a typical student who maximized opportunities with Eagle Enterprises might follow the track described below.

A typical service track. The student would come into the program in the summer following his/her 8th grade year and participate in the summer program. The student is recruited by hearing a presentation made by the Eagle Enterprises summer program coordinator at his/her middle school, which his/her school case manager recommended he/she attend. The student and his/her parents fill out and submit an application, and he/she is accepted into the program. During the summer, on Mondays, the student participates in career education classes and, Tuesday through Thursday, helps one of the special education teachers set up computers for schools in the district to use in the fall.

In September, the student returns to school and enters the 9th grade. During the school year, the student, building upon work experience gained during the previous summer, works one class period a day in the bagel shop, under the supervision of the special needs job coordinator, learning the basics of customer relations, good work habits, food handling and preparation, and cash register use. During the next summer, in order to continue developing workplace skills and exposure to different work settings, the student returns to the summer program and is assigned another worksite. This summer, the student might work off school grounds at public works along with 4 other youth, employed at various tasks such as painting buildings, picking up litter, and working in the yard waste recycling program. The student is supervised by an on-site supervisor from the public works department. The summer program coordinator visits the site every day to check up on the students and comes as needed to address any issues or problems. The summer program coordinator reports on the youth's summer experience to the youth's case manager who monitors the youth's IEP and who may have referred the youth to the summer program to gain workplace skills and work experience.

In the sophomore year, the learning disabilities counselor responsible for all scheduling of special education students suggests that the student work in the floral shop for one class period a day, learning how to do floral arrangements, landscaping, and caring for plants in the greenhouse. The student works in the floral shop for the entire year. The following summer, he/she would be expected to obtain unsubsidized summer employment. The special needs job coordinator notes that most students are ready for unsubsidized employment after 2 years in the summer program. In the junior year, the student works at the school store, learning tasks associated with retailing. The student is supervised by the special education teacher who instructs the students on how to run the school store. In the senior year, the student joins the Work-Study program and operates one of the Express Bagel Carts. The student picks up necessary supplies from the bagel shop in the morning, goes to a local elementary school to set up the bagel cart, and works for 3 hours selling bagels and coffee to teachers and staff. He/she is visited during the day by a teacher's aide for the program who makes sure that the student has everything he/she needs and everything is going okay. The student returns to the high school in the late morning and continues academic classes. In the spring, the special needs job coordinator arranges a job shadowing opportunity for the student at one of Atlantic City's casinos (the area's largest employers). The student spends one day a week for 6 weeks observing individuals employed in different parts of the casino (e.g., waiters, cashiers, accountants, human resources). Through the employment preparation class taught by the job coordinator, the student produces a resume, engages in mock interviews, and explores the education and training necessary for different occupations of interest. Upon graduation, the student applies for and is hired for an entry-level job at Shop Rite, a local supermarket.

ROLE OF SUMMER COMPONENT IN INTEGRATED PROGRAM

Sixty students participate in the summer program. About 40 percent of the students involved in the summer program are active in 1999-2000 school-year activities, either through the in-school businesses or the Work-Study program. This number is not anticipated to change in the next school year. All of the students who participate in the summer program receive work experience, education remediation, and job readiness training.

For many students, the summer program serves as a first stepping stone to the world of work. Although not all students who participate in the in-school program participate in the summer program, the students do generally view the summer program as a component of a single year-round program. For some students, the teacher who supervises them in the summer is the same one they work for in one of the in-school businesses. The summer program provides a structured and supported 3-day-a-week work experience coupled with job readiness training. Positive work habits that students learn in the summer are reinforced during the school year for students who choose to work in one of the 3 in-school businesses. Case managers responsible for monitoring students' IEPs throughout the year may refer their students to the summer program, and they are informed about progress the students make during the summer. The school's learning disabilities counselor has recently proposed that students in the summer program receive academic course credit, in addition to being paid, for successful completion of the summer program, thereby establishing a stronger link between summer employment and the academic school-year program.

A student's experience. Jennie was a very troubled 9th grade student. She received home-based instruction for nearly all her freshman year as she struggled with a variety of physical, emotional, and learning problems. Her freshman year teachers were skeptical that she would ever graduate from high school and make something of herself. She participated in the summer program following her freshman year and was employed at the school snack bar. She was able to apply this experience the following school year when she worked at the bagel shop one class period a day. Jennie developed a close relationship with the special needs job coordinator who supervised the bagel shop, calling him "Dad." In

Jennie's junior year, she took a course in consumer math with the teacher who supervised the school store, and he suggested she work there. Jennie's self-esteem increased and her confidence grew as she mastered the many tasks associated with running the store. The teacher who supervised the school store was impressed with the growth in Jennie's confidence and abilities and suggested she be part of the Work-Study program her senior year, taking a larger role in operating the school store. Jennie became the assistant manager of the school store. She felt ownership of the position, and the store became her store. As the first assistant manager of the store, Jennie defined what the role should be. Jennie often spent her study hall working in the school store, over and above the 3 hours per day for which she received academic credit and minimum wage remuneration.

In her weekly career development, Jennie told the special needs job coordinator she wanted to work at Harrah's Casino as a cocktail waitress upon graduation. Although the coordinator was not enthusiastic about Jennie working in the casino, he arranged for her to do job shadowing there one day a week for 6 weeks. She observed cocktail waitresses and casino employees working in other jobs. At the end of her job shadowing experience, Jennie was offered a position as an assistant agent helping preferred customers at the casino. However, Jennie told the job coordinator, "Casino life is not for me," and she turned down the position. At the same time, the job coordinator received a call from his wholesale bagel distributor who was seeking to fill a position taking wholesale orders over the phone. The job coordinator recommended Jennie, and she was hired. She worked at the bagel distributor for a year and then began to take classes at the local community college. Jennie decided she wanted to become a teacher and she quit the bagel distributor job to get a job working at a child care center in order to get more practical experience for her chosen vocation. The job coordinator says he doesn't know if Jennie will actually become a teacher, but he would not be surprised if she did.

A teacher's experience. One of the special education teachers involved in the program is the teacher who runs the school store. He is involved in all 3 components of Eagle Enterprises. For the in-school program, he teaches 3 classes in the fundamentals of retailing, which involves students working in the school store for one class period each. In these classes, students learn inventory, housekeeping, computer spreadsheets, merchandising, advertising, and customer relations. Two of these classes have 5 students, and the other class has 7. He also teaches 2 consumer math classes where the students learn about earning money, managing households, banking, and buying a car and insurance. During the summer, the teacher provides instruction to students on job readiness and pre-employment skills and supervises a group of students who work for the school as their summer employment (e.g., getting new computers set up for the district). He also supervises the student involved in the 10-month Work-Study program who acts as the assistant manager for the school store.

An employer's experience. One of the major employers that provides a summer worksite for the students is the local public works department. Public works has participated as an employer for the summer program for the past 7 years. It was recruited to participate by the PIC. Each summer it provides employment for 4 to 6 students. The students work 3 days a week from 7:00 am until 1:00 pm. In addition, public works hires other students to work for the summer in unsubsidized positions. The students work in small groups with a public works supervisor and engage in such tasks as picking up litter, emptying compost bags of leaves and grass, painting barrels, and other types of general maintenance work. The employer believes that most of the youth see the summer program as a summer job, but it has had youth from the summer program return the following summer and apply to work in a 5-day-per-week unsubsidized job. So far, none of the summer participants has applied for a full-time position with public works, but if they were to do so, their summer experience would give them a step up over other applicants.

The public works employer describes the youth as great workers, who are very conscientious and call if they are going to be absent or tardy. The employer has not had any significant problems with the students in the 7 years of the program. When minor problems arise, such as conflict among students, the employer calls the program coordinator who immediately comes to the worksite and settles the issues. The summer program coordinator visits the site daily and discusses individual students' progress and any problems with the supervisors. Any workplace issues or problems that arise during the week are discussed in group forums held on Monday mornings with all students who participate in the summer program.

The summer program staff are described as very accessible, and the employer feels that this is a strong contributor to the programs' success. The employer does not need to worry about disciplinary issues as these are handled by the summer program coordinator in the rare occasions that they arise. The students know that it's a privilege to work in the program. The employer plans to continue to participate in the program as long as it is there and would recommend it to other employers.

A worksite supervisor's experience. One of the worksites for the Work-Study program is a local elementary school. One of the 1st grade teachers has hosted 3 different Work-Study students in her classroom in the past 3 years to work as teacher's aides. The students' experience is a combination of job shadowing and paid work experience. During the first few weeks following placement, the student observes the teacher, and the teacher finds out more about the student's interests and capabilities. The student also helps the teacher by filing and doing paperwork. Then the student will move into more active involvement in the classroom, working individually with students and perhaps teaching a class. The first student the teacher supervised had cerebral palsy and was in a wheelchair. She was responsible for helping in the classroom and teaching the students a weekly social studies lesson. Although she could not write herself, she successfully instructed the students in handwriting. She would work one on one with children, telling them how to hold their pencils, pointing out mistakes, and offering advice on how they could improve their handwriting. The teacher serves as a supervisor and mentor to the Work-Study students. She completes an evaluation form on the student bi-weekly, which discusses areas where improvements are needed and those where there has been significant progress. The special needs job coordinator also tells the teacher what areas were being stressed in the classroom component of the class, and the teacher gives the program coordinator feedback on the student's classroom performance. The special needs job coordinator also visits the classroom 2 or 3 times per week, and the teacher gives him informal feedback on how the work experience is progressing.

The teacher feels that having a special education student, particularly a physically disabled student, in the classroom is of great benefit to the student and to the 1st grade students and their parents. The teacher has seen a good deal of growth in the students as they take on more responsibilities in the classroom. The 1st graders enjoy the additional one on one attention the teacher's aide can provide.

Preparing for Unsubsidized Work

Students are prepared for unsubsidized employment and postsecondary education in a variety of ways in the program, and all of these approaches are mutually reinforcing. Students in all 3 components learn basic job readiness skills such as the importance of punctuality, how to receive direction and guidance from a supervisor, and how to work cooperatively with others. In the academic components of the program, students learn important job search skills, such as resume and application writing, interviewing, and researching the education and skill requirements of different occupations. Students who participate in the in-school businesses and the Work-Study components learn specific job skills (e.g., working cash registers, counting change, inventory, food safety, customer relations) that can be readily transferred to other entry-level jobs, particularly those in retail. Through job shadowing and job placement assistance, many students in the Work-Study program find their first job after graduation through the program. Finally, successful completion of these work experiences provides students with references they can use in their search for unsubsidized employment.

As the program gradually moves students from more structured work environments to greater autonomy and responsibility, students gain confidence in their abilities, enabling them to sell themselves more effectively to prospective employers. The students report that they learn a lot in the program that will prepare them for future employment, including: "social skills, being responsible, discipline, organization, how to deal with people, being respectful." On a scale of one to 10, the 6 students in our focus group gave the in-school program an average score of 9.7. Four of the 6 youth were also involved in the summer program, and 3 gave it a 10, with one giving it a score of 2 (primarily because he had a summer job that he really disliked).

Assessment of Service Integration

Eagle Enterprises started the summer program in 1988 and added the other 2 program components, the in-school businesses and the Work-Study program, in 1990 and 1992. During this time, the program has gone through changes (for example, 2 of the original in-school businesses were not successful and had to be abandoned and 2 new businesses added), but the basic service offering has remained the same. Students have the opportunity to participate in the program year-round, though some prefer to find their own summer jobs, and some students choose not to be part of the in-school businesses. Although the special needs job coordinator expressed a willingness to modify the program to meet the new guidelines of WIA, at the time of our visit, he had not yet been informed of what the new guidelines include. One change that the program did wish to implement was a 12-month followup of students after graduation. The coordinator said that he would like to find funding to support one of the special education staff staying at the school 2 evenings per week so that former students could stop in to discuss problems and make plans for career advancement. The special education staff is currently at capacity with respect to their available time, however.

Innovative Features of the Program

There are several innovative features of this program. First is the population the program is designed to serve: special education students. Special education students often face additional barriers to employment, which may stem from their physical or learning disabilities or from discrimination based on public perceptions of the students' capabilities. Providing students with the type of job readiness training and skill development delivered by this program gives them a successful work history, which can provide the necessary boost to gain and maintain unsubsidized employment. Working in the school store is seen by students as "cool," and non-special education students frequently ask the instructor if they can enroll (they cannot). The in-school businesses have helped remove the stigma of being classified as a special education student.

Second, the program provides a variety of different work experiences during the summer and the school year, both in and out of school, that vary in the amount of structure and autonomy involved. Students are placed in different jobs based on an assessment of their readiness to assume new challenges. The size of the classes in the in-school business are small (5 to 7 students) so that each student can receive individual attention and guidance from his/her supervisor.

A third innovation of the program is that the component that serves the largest number of students, the in-school businesses, does not receive any public funding but is totally self-supporting from the revenues generated by the businesses programs and from donations from local businesses. For example, Shop Rite provided assistance in setting up the school store. In return, when students from the store apply to work at Shop Rite, the store will get entry-level employees who are already trained in retail trade. The program began with a $1000 mini-grant from the State of New Jersey and has since used business revenues to support program expansion. The lack of reliance on public funding means that the program can continue to offer services regardless of fluctuations in funding allocations under WIA.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

This particular program model has functioned without specific linkages to other programs.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

Responsibility for job development falls primarily on the shoulders of the special needs job coordinator. He encourages students to explore career interests using special career exploration software available from the school counselor. He uses his informal network of contacts to make job referrals to students. Most significantly, he arranges for job shadowing experiences for students in the Work-Study program, giving them first-hand observation of different occupations they are interested in. Students also receive placement assistance in the form of a May job fair run by the chamber of commerce. In addition, an annual workshop organized by educators and human resource representatives from the casino industry is provided to students, and those who complete the program are provided with a license to work at the casino which is paid for by the PIC.

At this point, post-placement followup occurs informally in the program. Many students keep in touch with the special needs job coordinator and other teachers they have worked with due to the positive relationship they developed over their school years. The coordinator would like to formalize post-placement followup by having a staff member work at the school 2 nights per week, so that former students could drop in for career advice. Currently students are referred to the PIC for post-placement services, but the coordinator feels the school would be more effective at delivering needed services given their established relationship with the students.

OUTCOMES

The Eagle Enterprise program measures program outcomes by students' abilities to obtain a number of generic and specific job skills. Some of these skills include the 13 JTPA Youth Employment Competencies:

- Making career decisions
- Using labor market information
- Preparing a resume
- Filling out a job application
- Interviewing
- Understanding punctuality
- Maintaining regular attendance
- Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviors

- Presenting appropriate appearance
- Exhibiting good interpersonal relations
- Completing tasks effectively
- Demonstrated proficiency in mathematical computation skills
- Demonstrated proficiency in reading skills

Other competencies the youth are expected to master are more specific to entry-level service jobs: performing customer service, operating a cash station, receiving payments and processing receipts, performing bookkeeping functions, performing stock-keeping duties, and performing housekeeping duties. For students in the Work-Study program, specific work competencies related to their specific job are evaluated by the students' site supervisors every few weeks. For example, for a student employed as a teacher's aide, the competencies include the following, among others: recording attendance, grading papers, enforcing classroom rules, operating a copy machine, and providing small group instruction (Attachment 1 for more examples). Areas that need improvement are emphasized by the special needs job coordinator and site supervisors until the student can complete the tasks independently. By the time students graduate high school, they will have developed and achieved the competencies necessary to gain and maintain unsubsidized employment. The special needs job coordinator provides the PIC with reports of the numbers of students who have achieved various youth competencies for students who are in the summer program and the Work-Study program, although Eagle Enterprises does not have a computerized management information system.

From all interviews, it is apparent that the program has been an overall success for most participants. In group discussions with students involved in various components of the program, there was unanimous opinion that the program had been a good experience. Students had worked in various jobs, including the bagel shop, computer installation, and tutoring elementary students. All the students highly rated the program and said that they would recommend it to their friends. In addition, the participants said that they had not heard of any complaints from other students in the program.

A followup survey conducted in 1995 of 36 of 48 students who participated in the Work-Study program from 1989 to 1994 indicated that 78 percent were employed—68 percent full-time and the remainder part-time. This may be contrasted with national statistics reported in the *Fifteenth Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Education of the Handicapped Act, 1994*, (compiled by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services), which indicated that of all handicapped students out of high school more than one year, just 46 percent are employed either full-time or part-time. The largest percentage of Eagle Enterprise graduates were employed in the hospitality/tourism industry (nearly 30 percent) which, in the Atlantic City area, offers entry-level workers pay that is 30 percent higher than the national average.[5]

The special needs job coordinator believes the program is largely successful with most participants. He estimates that 95 percent of participants complete the program components in which they enroll (whether the summer program, the in-school businesses or the Work-Study program), and approximately 90 percent achieve positive outcomes. He explains that it is important to teach the students to have realistic goals and also to have realistic goals as program staff. He understands that his program cannot make sweeping changes in a young person's life, but the differences that it is able to make in participants' work habits, job skills, and self-confidence can be life altering.

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[5] Zentmeyer, R. W. 1995. Followup Study on Student Graduates of the Eagle Enterprise Supportive Employment Work-Study Program: A Model School-to-Work Transition Network. Egg Harbor Township, NJ: Egg Harbor Township School District.

Some students do drop out of the program for various reasons. The main reason the coordinator cited for students' failure to continue in the program is because their special education status is eliminated, making them ineligible for program services. The declassification of students is usually requested by parents who do not want their children labeled "special education." In addition, behavioral and social problems force some participants out of the program, though students are given several chances for improvement before they are excluded from the program.

The employers interviewed had positive experiences working with the program and the participants. The 1st grade teacher found that her student aides performed far beyond her expectations. The teacher said of one participant with cerebral palsy that "She learned everything and was able to do everything." The employee of the public works department said it had few problems with students, and special accommodations were not necessary to help students do their jobs. The participants arrived at work on time and completed their work efficiently. The public works employer has had only one problem with a student, and the program coordinator resolved the conflict immediately. Both employers also thought the program beneficial because it offered the participants a chance to view the real world of work and to make a real contribution.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Eagle Enterprise Program has been an overall success according to the staff, participants, and employers. One of the key ingredients to this success is the continuity of services and opportunities provided to the participants. Many young people enter the program in the summer before high school, and they are given opportunities to continue with the program throughout their high school career and during subsequent summers. The program provides employment opportunities that are gradually less structured, allowing students to succeed before moving into successively more challenging and autonomous positions. In addition, the program provides students with the many components necessary for successful school-to-work transition: employment opportunities, career exploration, job shadowing, and the development of transferable entry-level job skills.

At the time of our visit, the special needs job coordinator had not yet been informed about the changes that would be necessary under WIA but indicated a willingness to adapt the program to fit WIA's parameters. Fortunately, the program has functioned for many years with its summer and school year services already integrated; therefore, few changes will likely be necessary for this program to meet WIA guidelines.

Having functioned as a successful program for a number of years, there are several lessons learned by the staff. The most important lesson was "not to be all things to all people." Early on, the program staff found that they were trying to do too many things and were being stretched too thin. The program has experienced more success by focusing on those youth whom they can best serve and expanding the program slowly over time. Also, the program director recommends that groups always try new strategies and ideas. It is important not to reject any idea because "you cannot know what works until you try." The program has learned from its mistakes—not all of the in-school businesses have succeeded—but it has progressively built a strong in-school business program that not only provides students with learning opportunities but that is self-sustaining without the support of government funding.

The staff also credits its success with the fact that it has a diverse mixture of people working together. There is a combination of individuals with grand visions for the program's future and a number of "nuts and bolts" people who can operationalize the vision by identifying concrete steps that need to be accomplished. Because of this combination of visionaries and practitioners, the program is not limited by technical problems but also does not develop into a large, unmanageable dream.

Another factor in the program's success is the close supervision provided to youth in the program while they are on the job site. The program is careful to match capabilities and temperaments to the types of work experiences available. Daily monitoring by the program coordinator ensures that problems and conflicts are addressed quickly and that the students get mentoring from a caring adult. Because employers know that the program staff will provide any necessary support, guidance or discipline to participants when the program hires them, they can feel free to take a risk with youth they might otherwise not employ.

The final lesson noted by the special needs job coordinator is that local programs should not have to follow a prescribed formula but must be a grassroots effort. This program began with an interest in helping special education students transition to the world of work and an assessment of the skills necessary to make this transition. The program is tailored to provide youth with the skills and experience needed to become gainfully employed in the local labor market. Each youth employment program should be tailored to a community's individual economic circumstances. In the Atlantic City area, hospitality/ tourism, food service, and retail sales provide the largest number of jobs, so the skills necessary to obtain these types of jobs are emphasized by Eagle Enterprises. Another locality might require a different mix of skills to meet the demands of the local labor market.

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62

THE STEP-UP PROGRAM
MILWAUKEE PIC
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Number in-school:	844
Number out-of-school (JTPA Def)	851
Total	1,695
Number IIC & IIB	Appx. 750
Number IIB	Appx. 945
Total	Appx. 1,695

Characteristics for all 1,695 youth participants (in-school/ out-of-school, IIB/IIC breakdowns not available):

Gender:	
Male	35%
Female	65%
Race:	
White	7%
African-American/Black	78%
Hispanic	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1%
Age:	
14-15	35%
16-17	41%
18 or older	24%
AFDC/TANF	19%
Food stamps	1%
Unemployment compensation	NA
SSI	4%
General assistance or home relief	<1%
Other	7% (unable to specify)
Tutoring (done by referral to school personnel)	NA
Alternative enrolled in alternative schools	50%
Summer employment linked	0%
Paid & unpaid work experience	77%
Occupational skills training (IT 2000 and youth media project)	13%
Leadership development	100%
Supportive services	12%
Adult mentoring	NA
Followup services (informal only)	NA
Guidance (available during summer school)	NA
Job search and placement	100%
Post-placement followup	100% in public/govt summer employment Private: only if difficulties arise

INTRODUCTION

In 1989, the Milwaukee Private Industry Council (PIC) began operating a year-round youth employment program called The School to Employment Program—Upward Progress (STEP-UP). STEP-UP serves youth during the school year by providing training in 7 basic and employment-related competencies and, during the summer, by providing subsidized work experience in public agencies and community-based organizations and, for older youth, unsubsidized summer jobs in the private sector. The distinguishing characteristic of the STEP-UP program is that it places a full-time STEP-UP Coordinator in each of Milwaukee's regular 15 high schools who maintains consistent contact with youth and oversees the program during the school year and the summer.

STEP-UP provides a year-round integrated experience for youth. During the school year, participants are trained by Coordinators in 7 work-related competency areas. During the summers, youth apply these competencies in either subsidized or unsubsidized summer jobs. Coordinators plan and monitor the youth's participation in the year-round program, including summer employment site visits to ensure that youth are applying the competencies on the job. During the past 2 years, the PIC has begun to broaden the STEP-UP experience, through a series of special programs in which the focus is on learning and applying specific vocational skills on the job in integrated summer/school year programs. Occupational skills are learned either during the summer followed by related, part-time occupational employment during the school year or during the school year with application on the job during the summer months.

Because STEP-UP is already a year-round integrated youth program, Milwaukee will be making only moderate changes as it makes the transition to WIA. In addition to finding new ways to reach youth

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Other	
Employment/work experience	Appx. 90%
Educational remediation, enrichment (regular summer school)	30%
Occupational skills training (IT 2000 and media project)	13%
Job readiness training (750 of 1,500 are HC & complete competencies)	Appx. 50%
Outcome for in-school youth	
Complete program:	80%
Positive outcomes:	80%
(PIC equates completing program with + outcome)	

who are out of school, the Milwaukee PIC has recently begun forming partnerships with other organizations in the community to develop and implement smaller, specialized programs within STEP-UP that emphasize specific occupational clusters and career paths. Two such specialized youth programs are Information Technology 2000, a program that focuses on preparing youth for information technology careers, and The Milwaukee Youth Media Project, a program that emphasizes careers in the media.

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

As of December 1999, nominations had been submitted for the Workforce Investment Board and the Youth Council.[6] The County Executive had approved the nominations and, at the time this report was prepared, was waiting for the nominees to accept. The Milwaukee PIC hopes to retain the name "PIC," because it believes that public agencies, like private businesses, should not readily change their names. The Milwaukee PIC submitted a full WIA implementation plan for public review in December 1999. The plan was scheduled to be submitted to the state of Wisconsin and to the U.S. Department of Labor during January-February 2000.

STEP-UP was initially designed as a youth employment program that reaches youth where they spend most of their time—at school. The STEP-UP Coordinators, who are responsible for providing competency training and employment services for youth, are based in 15 Milwaukee high schools and also have responsibility for the 22 alternative high schools in the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) system. Consequently, the PIC found it relatively easy to reach out-of-school youth because they were attending alternative high schools, thus meeting the JTPA definition of out-of-school youth. The STEP-UP programs for youth attending alternative schools are virtually the same as those for other in-school youth. In PY99, STEP-UP served roughly the same number of in-school and out-of-school youth (844 in-school and 851 out-of school).

Under WIA, students attending alternative schools are no longer considered out-of-school youth. The Milwaukee PIC is currently making plans to reach out-of-school youth under the new definition (see *Recruitment and Selection of Participants* for a detailed discussion). The PIC believes that much of the first year funds designated for out-of-school youth will be devoted to installing mechanisms for locating the out-of-school youth. Therefore, the percent of youth served in PY 2000 who are considered out-of-school will be quite low the first year, perhaps as low as 10-15 percent. A new STEP-UP Coordinator has been hired specifically to identify and work with the out-of-school population. Other Coordinators will be hired to help manage this caseload.

The PIC considers the STEP-UP program a year-round integrated experience for youth because it provides training in 7 competency areas—basic skills, career development, life skills, pre-employment, job retention, work maturity, and leadership/personal skills—and follows that up with a summer employment experience that allows students to apply and practice what they learned during the school year.

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[6] See Attachment 1 for sample Youth Council agendas.

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PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUTH STRATEGY

The Milwaukee PIC began preparing for WIA before the legislation passed. The PIC tracked the legislation as it made its way through Congress and began thinking about possible implications. In early October 1999, the PIC held its first formal meeting to begin formulating the local youth plan. Present at the meeting were the CEO of the PIC, the Youth Services Director, the interim STEP-UP project director, and two PIC planners. They read the law, planned for a public meeting known as a "Listening Session" to meet the WIA requirement for public comment and input in the planning process, and started revising the previous JTPA plan to adhere to WIA requirements.

An outline for the new plan was circulated for review to PIC staff, STEP-UP Coordinators, Jobs for Wisconsin Graduates Job Specialists, and Milwaukee Career Center staff. Responses were received in early November. The plan was then presented to the Youth Council.[7] Youth representatives on the Council were encouraged to provide input, but they tended to defer to the adult members of the Council. The Youth Council then recommended the plan to the Workforce Investment Board in late November. A draft of the final plan was made public in early December.

The PIC held the Listening Session in December to discuss the implications of WIA for youth programs. The session was advertised in several local newspapers. Packets containing information on WIA and the purpose of the Listening Session were available at the PIC in advance and at the session itself. Attendees included representatives of community-based organizations, representatives of the Youth Council, some private industry employers, a few principals from MPS high schools, and other PIC staff members. The Youth Services Director believes that the session was not as beneficial as intended. Even though the PIC provided information on WIA ahead of time, most attendees were not familiar with WIA and instead used the session as a forum for discussing their particular interests (e.g., "Why can't my community-based organization get more subsidized summer employees?"). The PIC has learned that it is important to be very clear with participants about the purpose of public meetings to discuss the new law and its implications.

The key issue discussed during the planning sessions was how to handle the change in definition of out-of-school youth. Specifically, how would the PIC attract and recruit out-of-school youth when they could not count those who are attending alternative schools?

Three key factors enabled Milwaukee to produce a full plan rather than a transitional plan in just a few months:

1. Because Milwaukee already operates an integrated, year-round youth employment program, the PIC does not view WIA as a radical departure from JTPA. When forming the new plan, they started with last year's plan and made changes as appropriate.

2. The PIC began planning and thinking about changes well before the legislation was enacted.

3. The PIC relied on the hard work and long hours of a well-trained and productive PIC staff. The quality of the PIC staff was often cited as a reason for success.

However, going immediately into a program that is fully WIA compliant, rather than through a transitional phase, imposed some tight deadlines on the PIC staff and caused a few problems during the planning period. The STEP-UP coordinators were not involved early in the planning process because there was not enough time to include them. This resulted in some confusion among the staff. The PIC has learned that it is better to be as inclusive as possible, as early as possible. Also, as is the case in many organizations, when news of impending changes began to circulate, some staff members were concerned that their jobs were in jeopardy. Program managers recognize that they should have kept the staff fully informed about the effects of changes in the law.

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[7] The Milwaukee PIC already had a Youth Committee, which easily made a transition to a Youth Council. The Youth Council members have voting rights on the Council and act in an advisory capacity to the Workforce Investment Board.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The 15 STEP-UP Coordinators are based in all of the regular high schools in MPS. At the beginning of the school year, in an effort to recruit year-round participants, the coordinators make announcements over the intercom, set up information tables in the cafeteria, and take referrals from local social service agencies. They also consider students who approach them directly, having heard of the program through word of mouth. The youth must then fill out forms to verify eligibility for the program. Each STEP-UP coordinator has a caseload of 50 WIA-eligible students with whom they work individually throughout the school year and during the summer. Much of that work consists of training in the 7 competency areas during the school year and application of those competencies in their summer jobs.

During April, the STEP-UP coordinators once again begin recruiting—this time for the summer employment component. In addition to the 50 students they have been working with over the school year, each Coordinator must place another 50 students in subsidized jobs in public sector agencies and community-based organizations, and another 100-150 in private sector positions. Recruitment in the spring is similar to fall recruitment; Coordinators use flyers, announcements, and lunchtime booths to recruit students. Because STEP-UP is a known entity in the schools, recruiting students for summer jobs is not difficult. The STEP-UP staff feel that the current recruitment process operates quite smoothly and intend to continue the process under WIA.

Under JTPA, the recruitment and selection of youth for the STEP-UP program did not vary by in-school or out-of-school status. Most out-of-school youth were attending alternative high schools and were recruited in the same way as in-school youth. To reach youth who were not in any type of school, the PIC recruited by word of mouth, posting flyers in the community, soliciting referrals from agencies and organizations, and through a radio announcement.

Strategies that have been proposed for reaching out-of-school youth under WIA include:

- operating youth employment booths at many of Milwaukee's summer festivals (e.g., Asian Moon, Juneteenth Day, African World Festival, Mexican Fest, and Indian Summer);
- placing computerized kiosks at malls that contain information on Milwaukee PIC youth programs;
- accessing a list of youth who go to community-based organizations such as the YMCA to receive work permits;[8]

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[8] Wisconsin's youth must obtain work permits before qualifying for a job. The work permits verify age and citizenship. The PIC absorbs the cost of permits obtained through STEP-UP Coordinators; otherwise, permits cost $5 at local agencies. Therefore, youth not in schools are likely to be the ones who obtain permits at community-based organizations.

- obtaining a list of dropouts from MPS; and
- obtaining a list from the district attorney's and public defender's offices of possible dropouts who had been involved in the criminal justice system.

The effectiveness of the recruiting techniques for WIA-defined out-of-school youth has yet to be fully determined. Last summer's effort at Milwaukee's summer festivals were not as productive as the PIC had hoped. They were able to make contact with 80 to 100 out-of-school youth as well as over 400 in-school youth who accessed PIC services. The other strategies are beginning to be implemented. The PIC anticipates that the most effective recruiting techniques will be the list of dropouts from MPS and the lists of youth seeking work permits from local agencies.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

Currently, each STEP-UP participant in the coordinator's 50-person caseload (both in-school and out-of-school youth) is given an individual interview/orientation with the STEP-UP coordinator. One coordinator said that she tried doing small group interviews, but found that the participants were hesitant to speak up and typically came to her later for an individual discussion. She now does all initial interviews/orientations on an individual basis. The coordinator, using interviews, testing, observation, and record review, determines whether the participant requires further training in any or all of the following seven competencies:

- Basic Skills (reading, listening, math, communication, and computer skills);
- Career Development (career interests, interest assessment, career exploration, career development plan);
- Life Skills (self value systems, health awareness, use of support services, relationships, everyday skills);
- Pre-Employment Skills (resume preparation, job search, application letters, telephone interviews, application forms, interview skills, employment tests);
- Job Retention Skills (appearance, punctuality, time management, following directions, attendance, interpersonal skills, proper job resignations, positive attitude);
- Work Maturity Skills (understands job/responsibility, decision making, attains job skills, understands/follows directions, safety awareness, uses/accepts feedback); and
- Leadership/Personal Skill (team concepts, group presentations, community service, leadership skills).

After the assessment, the coordinator completes the STEP-UP Competency Assessment Record (Attachment 2) and the coordinator and the participant both sign the Milwaukee PIC's Youth Development Plan Agreement (Attachment 3). The Coordinator also completes the JTPA Individual Service Strategy (Attachment 4) and the Objective Assessment Summary (Attachment 5).

The assessment process will not be fundamentally changed under WIA. With the new definition of out-of-school youth, however, the PIC is unsure at this time how they will assess these truly out-of-school youth. The service goals of moving out-of-school youth back into school or into employment will guide the assessment design.

Additional information about assessments is described in the following section.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Overview of Integrated Service Delivery to In-School[9] Youth

The PIC considers the STEP-UP program a year-round integrated experience for youth because it provides training in competency areas and follows up the training with a summer employment experience that allows students to apply and practice what they learned during the school year. This is the primary way in which the school year and summer components are linked. During the last 2 years, under new leadership, the PIC has also begun to provide STEP-UP experiences that train youth in specific occupational skills and follow up with summer employment in those specific fields (see *Special Integrated Programs* in this section). Under JTPA, little attention had been paid to placing youth in summer jobs that were consistent with the youth's career objectives. Under WIA, however, the Coordinators will specialize in specific careers, consistent with the specialty of the high school at which they are based (e.g., hospitality, media, arts). These changes reinforce the key linkage between the school year and summer component in STEP-UP: the relationship between the soft skills they learn from the Coordinator over the course of the school year and the summer job at which the youth apply these skills.

STEP-UP's distinguishing feature is its placement of full-time, full-year coordinators in each of the high schools, with responsibility extending to the alternative, private, parochial, suburban, and middle schools. Although the coordinators are not employed by the school system, MPS has agreed to provide office space for STEP-UP coordinators and to allow access to students and student records on a regular basis. STEP-UP coordinators are the only non-union, non-MPS employees allowed in the schools. STEP-UP coordinators handle all employment-related services in the schools.

The STEP-UP coordinators have been responsible for two types of program participants. The first constitutes the coordinator's "caseload" and consists of the 50 youth who receive training in competencies during the school year (IIC) and then apply them in a summer job (IIB). The second type participates only in the summer component (IIB only). The coordinator is also responsible for finding private sector summer positions for older youth. Thus, STEP-UP coordinators have typically placed a total of more than 3,000 youth in summer jobs—750 IIC+IIB; 750 IIB only, and 1,500 private sector positions.

A large portion of STEP-UP participants (35 percent in PY 1999) are 14 or 15 years of age. The PIC views 14- or 15-year-olds as the age group most in need of assistance because of legal restrictions on the age of employees in many occupations and because they are the least likely to have work experience. According to the PIC staff, Milwaukee youth 16-18 years of age have little difficulty finding summer jobs on their own.

A youth begins participation in the school-year component of the STEP-UP program by first contacting his/her STEP-UP coordinator at the school. STEP-UP Coordinators are the only employment specialists in the schools. The youth may have heard about STEP-UP from a friend, a school announcement, the radio, or an information booth during a summer festival or during the lunch hour in the cafeteria. The STEP-UP coordinator asks the youth to fill out the applications, have their parents sign the applications, and bring in the required materials (e.g., birth certificate, Social Security card, documentation of family income). Some students do not continue the process because they are unable or unwilling to provide the necessary signatures or documentation. If more than 50 students apply and are found to be eligible, the coordinator can decide whom to serve using his/her own criteria (e.g., first-come-first-served or the most barriers to employment). One Coordinator said that almost all youth in her school who wish to receive intensive services do indeed receive these services under the 50-youth caseload.

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[9] Under JTPA, virtually all out-of-school youth served by STEP-UP attended alternative schools and received STEP-UP services that were virtually the same as for other in-school youth.

Once a youth has been determined to be WIA-eligible, the STEP-UP coordinator provides a one-on-one initial interview/orientation. At this time, the Coordinator discusses the program, emphasizing that good grades, good attendance at school, and a positive attitude are necessary to complete the year-round program. The short-term "payoff" for completing the year-round program is the summer job. The coordinator asks the youth to sign the Youth Development Plan Agreement (Attachment 3). The coordinator and the youth begin to discuss the youth's career interests and job skills, and the coordinator makes an assessment of the youth's competencies and need for additional training. As discussed earlier, these needs are reflected in the youth's individual service strategy. Although each coordinator keeps detailed records of the competencies achieved by each youth (Attachment 2), these data are not summarized at the overall STEP-UP level.

Over the course of the year, the STEP-UP coordinator trains the youth in the deficient competencies. If the youth happens to be deficient in the basic skills competency (e.g., reading, math), the coordinator makes a referral for tutoring to the appropriate school personnel. All interactions with youth are logged on the Training Plan Notes form (Attachment 6). Achieving these competencies helps prepare youth for unsubsidized employment and, if desired, postsecondary education. Training is typically one-on-one or is provided in small groups and takes place before school, during lunch, during study hall, or after school. One coordinator pointed out that she would prefer that her students eat breakfast rather than come in before school; she prefers after-school appointments. When after-school appointments result in missing the school buses, the STEP-UP coordinator has a stock of bus passes provided by the PIC or the school that she can give to youth needing rides home after a training session.

In addition to being trained in these competencies during the school year, the youth receive specific instructions on how to apply these competencies on the job. For example, a youth interested in working as a carpenter aide learns how to apply basic math skills to make measurement calculations. All participants are taught about the application of work maturity skills on the job, e.g., being punctual and informing employers in advance of planned absences from work.

Almost all youth achieve the competencies in one school year. The few who do not achieve competencies are allowed to return to the STEP-UP coordinator for services the next school year. A small number of youth may participate in the summer component for more than one year. STEP-UP subsidized summer employment experience with public agencies and community-based organizations is geared toward 14- to 15-year-olds. Youth 16 years of age and older are placed in private sector jobs or encouraged to find private sector work on their own. In either case, summer work experience plays a key role in providing a youth with the opportunity to apply the competencies learned during the school year. This is reflected in the youth's individual service strategy (ISS).

One of the principal goals in the ISS is the participant employment goal. In order to achieve this goal, the youth must demonstrate that they are job ready by successfully applying, in a summer work experience setting, the competencies they acquired during the school year. For example, before obtaining a summer job, the participants must be able to apply the pre-employment, communications and personal skills competencies needed in order to complete the application, selection and hiring process. While employed during the summer, the participant must demonstrate successful application of work maturity, job retention and life skills competencies.

The experience of one youth illustrates how services are delivered under STEP-UP. A youth who attended the art specialty high school in Milwaukee approached the STEP-UP coordinator during the fall. The coordinator did an initial interview with him and found him deficient in most of the competencies. After his visit to the Career Center (discussed below), and meetings with the coordinator during lunch, study hall, and after school, he completed all the competencies and was placed in a subsidized summer job. After returning to school, he asked the STEP-UP coordinator to help him explore opportunities in technical theater—he had decided he wanted to be a stagehand. The coordinator made several calls to arts organizations in the Milwaukee area and was able to secure an apprenticeship for the youth in the union for stagehands.

An important component of youth's integrated experience in STEP-UP is their referral by the STEP-UP coordinator to the Milwaukee Career Center (MCC), a PIC-operated organization funded by JTPA and the School-To-Work Opportunities Act. Since it opened in 1994, the MCC has served more than 20,000 individuals, mostly youth. At the MCC, youth 14-17 years of age receive a range of services oriented toward youth. Those 18-21 years of age may elect to receive either youth or adult services at the Career Center.

The youth program at the Milwaukee Career Center typically involves groups of middle or high school students. The students spend time in each of the MCC rooms. In the Computer Room, they use computers and *Discover* software to explore different careers. In the Resource Room, youth learn job-readiness skills (e.g., applications, resume writing), learn life-skills (e.g., budgeting), use visual aids (e.g., connect careers with skill and education levels required for that career) and play career-oriented games (e.g., Pictionary Careers). In the Interview Room, youth can undergo mock interviews and watch others being interviewed. Youth groups also participate in team-building exercises. In addition to activities centering on employment, youth are provided with information regarding postsecondary education (e.g., ACT/SAT prep programs, college search computer programs, and financial aid/scholarship programs).

The youth interviewed said they enjoyed their visit to the MCC, especially the team-building exercises. Most youth visit the MCC once, although the resource is available to them at any time. STEP-UP coordinators, as part of the Career Development Competency component, discuss the results of the MCC trip with the youth and use this information in helping them sort through career choices.

The adult program at the MCC, attended by youth 18-21, begins with a one-on-one interview and assessment of interests, abilities, and skills. Participants are then asked to prepare, at home, a list of past employment-related experiences, including paid work and volunteer and other relevant activities. During the second visit, the MCC counselor helps the participant build a history of experiences, organize this information into a resume, and write cover letters. Job search and interview skills are also covered over the course of an ongoing relationship between the participant and the MCC counselor.

Another role of the STEP-UP coordinator is to refer STEP-UP participants to private sector employment during the school year. This is a less formal aspect of the STEP-UP program and typically evolves over time as STEP-UP coordinators forge relationships with private sector employers in their areas. One such employer, a facility for the elderly that includes an assisted living center and a retirement community, has been employing STEP-UP students for 7 years. The relationship began when the facility was contacted by the STEP-UP Coordinator from the local high school. The facility only hires youth who have a 2.0 cumulative GPA and fewer than 10 absences in the previous school year. Under STEP-UP, employers can specify their own hiring criteria. Because the STEP-UP program uses the employer's criteria in pre-screening the youth, employers, such as the facility for the elderly, save time and money by not having to screen potential employees themselves. The facility employs about 50 youth from the Milwaukee area and typically has 5 to 10 STEP-UP students on its payroll at any given time. The youth gain valuable work experience as well as income. Their typical duties include setting up the salad bar, serving as wait staff, and dishwashing. The youth work 15-25 hours every 2 weeks and begin at $7 per hour. The employer has found that STEP-UP employees have exceeded the firm's expectations. The employer finds that these employees have a better sense of long-term goals, have more realistic expectations about work, and are less likely to be absent than other youth it has hired.

Because this employer believes that STEP-UP is a good program, she has assisted the program when called upon by her STEP-UP coordinator. For example, she attends job fairs sponsored by the PIC or other community organizations. Her local STEP-UP coordinator has also asked that she participate in mock interviews with STEP-UP youth at the local school and at the MCC. The employer typically participates in such activities once or twice a year.

Overview of the Summer Component

Youth in the STEP-UP program are referred for 8-week summer employment in community-based organizations, public agencies, and the private sector. Youth who face employment barriers (e.g., being 14 or 15 years old), are typically referred to subsidized employment, while youth who are more job-ready, typically those 16 years old or older, are referred to unsubsidized private sector jobs.

The private sector positions are developed by the 15 STEP-UP coordinators located in the high schools and one additional coordinator, located in the PIC office, who serves as a job developer year-round. One STEP-UP coordinator said that because STEP-UP has operated successfully for 10 years, most employers who hire youth are familiar with the program and contact the schools on their own initiative. Very few cold calls need to be made now to ensure enough private sector positions.

The subsidized positions are awarded to community-based organizations and public agencies that submit proposals in the spring. The new PIC leadership, seeking to improve the quality of the summer component, implemented new guidelines for choosing the organizations and agencies that will participate. The PIC now asks that these summer employers provide "project based" work experiences. Further, they ask that the organizations provide work experiences that (1) the youth will find rewarding, (2) provide work-based learning, (3) can be linked to a potential career path, and (4) provide a general service to the community at large. The PIC developed these criteria hoping to raise the level of responsibility for youth and decrease the number of low quality jobs.

In addition, when potential employers apply for funding for subsidized summer jobs, they are required to specify how the job openings they propose to fill will help the youth apply and further develop their work-related competencies. For each opening, the employer submits a Participant Training Plan (Attachment 7) to the coordinator. Following a paragraph-long job description, the plan then lists the workplace-related competencies, and employers are asked to indicate for each competency:

- How the youth will be trained in the competency (e.g. orally, through hands-on experience, through observation, or in written form such as reading/following written instructions or completing written assignments); and

- How the youth's progress in each competency will be measured (e.g. in the form of a discussion, written evaluation, or test).

The plan also lists the tools, equipment, and any special clothing that will be needed or supplied. The coordinator uses the information in a job opening's Participant Training Plan to match youth to the job opening. When a youth is hired for a position, he or she signs the plan.

The plan provides that the youth's progress is to be summarized every 2 weeks and attached to the time sheet. Also, during site visits, the coordinator checks to be sure that the plan's provisions for teaching competencies are being carried out. At the conclusion of the summer work experience, the employer submits a final evaluation of the participant.

The STEP-UP coordinator visits each summer employer in his/her area at least twice a summer. The first visit is announced in advance, and the second is unannounced. The coordinators also ask participants to fill out a survey that describes their experiences with the employer. Areas covered in this survey include, but are not limited to, testing, assessments, job matching, experience on the job, relationship between school and job, activities of supervisor, and clarity of employer expectations (Attachment 8).

The coordinators evaluate the overall performance of the summer employers in the following areas (Attachment 9):

- Were there structured, well-supervised learning experiences?
- Did all participants receive an orientation, participant manual, and a signed copy of their training plan before they began work?
- Did projects teach academic, work maturity, and job-specific skills to teams of STEP-UP youth?
- Were timesheets signed by participants and supervisors? Were timesheets ready for pick up?
- What is your general assessment of this organization?
- Would you recommend funding next year?

Agencies and organizations that offer the most valuable experiences for youth are rewarded during the next proposal process with continued funding. Those that fall short of expectations receive either less funding or no funding the following year. The PIC's experience is that most summer employers perform well and continue to receive funding.

Following summer employment, participants will usually follow one of three paths:

- Move into private sector employment, with the coordinator providing informal follow-up;
- Remain in the coordinator's caseload to reinforce or complete employment competencies and to explore career options; or
- Drop out of the program.

Special Integrated Programs

For most youth in STEP-UP, the summer and school year programs are integrated in the sense that the youth are trained in employment competencies during the school year and apply and reinforce these competencies during their summer employment. However, STEP-UP has taken summer/ school year program integration a step further with specialized initiatives. South Division High School's art program and 2 new partnership programs, Information Technology 2000 and the Milwaukee Youth Media Project are examples of several specialized initiatives.

The Art Program

Seven in-school youth interviewed for this study were part of a special art program that has been in existence for 4 years. The art program is a year-round effort that consists of designing and planning art projects during the school year and producing the work during the summer. The art teacher serves as the worksite supervisor during the summer. The school provides the supplies and pays the teacher for the summer hours. In return, the school receives art work decorating the building.

Each fall the school's art teacher selects 12-15 participants from the pool of WIA-eligible students taking his art classes. He does not necessarily choose the most talented but instead makes selections based on observed ability to benefit from the program and the teacher's desire to have a culturally diverse group.

During the school year component of the art program, youth design and plan their summer projects. They develop a specific idea within an overall theme of the year (e.g., past themes have included 20th Century Faces and Ethnic Heritage) and begin research. Research for the 20th Century Faces paintings entailed looking up photographs and descriptions of influential people in books, magazines, and on the Internet. During the summer, the students digitized the photographs and used Photoshop software to manipulate them on their computers. Finally, they used computer-based projection equipment to generate outlines of images that served as the framework for their paintings.

Although the summer experience was a creative endeavor, it was treated very much as a job. The students had to arrive on time and stay on task (Attachment 10). The participants worked from 7:00 am to 1:00 pm with two 15-minute breaks for 29 days. The teacher tries to create an enjoyable atmosphere, however, by occasionally providing snacks and soft drinks and allowing the youth to play music on the CD player.

The pieces of art produced by the summer project are prominently displayed throughout the school building. During the first year, the students made signs for each classroom, and during the next 3 years they produced paintings that decorate the halls and the cafeteria. The art work has never been defaced. The Coordinator and teacher attribute this to the sense of ownership that the students, artists and non-artists alike, feel for the art work and its contribution to the school building.

Partnership Programs

With the appointment of a new PIC CEO almost 2 years ago and a new director of the Youth Services Division a year ago, the PIC has become more active in seeking partnerships with local government, private, and community-based organizations in the Milwaukee area. The PIC's aim is to identify potential partners in the community that can contribute resources, thereby leveraging WIA youth resources, and creating more comprehensive, career-oriented, year-round youth employment and training programs within the parameters of the STEP-UP program. Two such specialized STEP-UP partnership programs have been formed during the last year—Information Technology 2000 and the Milwaukee Youth Media Project.

Information Technology 2000. In early 1999 the Milwaukee PIC entered into a partnership with the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee (UWM) School of Library and Information Science and INROADS/Wisconsin Inc., a national non-profit organization with 27 years of experience in career development. Just a few months later, in the summer of 1999, this partnership enrolled the first group of 150 WIA-eligible youth in a program called Information Technology 2000 (IT 2000). IT 2000 provides training in computer skills and soft skills during the summer and then helps participants to secure part-time entry-level information technology jobs in which they work during the school year.

In the spring, each of the 15 STEP-UP Coordinators recruited 10 sophomores and juniors for the program. Each coordinator was allowed to choose participants using his/her own criteria (most in need, most interested, etc.). The coordinators made sure that the youth understood they were committing to 60 hours of training over the course of 3 weeks during the summer. The training took place at UWM and consisted of (1) 20-24 hours of computer training in Frontpage, Word, and Excel and (2) 32-36 hours of soft skill training in the following areas (Attachment 11):

- Self-awareness and Self-presentation
- Social Interaction: Keys to Understanding Self and Others
- Workplace Basics: Creating a Positive First Impression
- Workplace Basics: Understanding Your Employment Relationship
- Succeeding at Work: Getting Along with Supervisors and Co-workers
- Industry Awareness Series: Education, Training, and Employment in Information Technology

Of the 110 youth who attended the orientation, 98 completed the program. The other 12 youth left for other summer jobs or family vacations. At the conclusion of the project, the youth displayed the products of their training (resumes and web pages) and gave personal testimony about their experiences at a recognition program hosted by the Chancellor at the UWM Library Conference Center.

Although the youth are trained and paid for only 3 weeks in the summer, the PIC believes that the youth are additionally compensated by the fact that they are receiving training in a high-paying field and that they receive placement assistance for part-time jobs during the school year.

When fully operational, IT 2000 hopes to place all youth who complete the program in part-time, school-year IT jobs in the public and private sectors. In 1999, the program successfully placed 28 completers. The project staff learned that securing positions in private industry would take time to develop and that the fall was not a particularly good time for new hiring. To overcome this problem, the next cycle of IT 2000 was planned to begin in January 2000, consisting of a series of Saturday workshops throughout the semester. Those completers will then be eligible for employment placement assistance in the summer. These workshops will cover the same material as the 1999 summer program. The partners fully expect the placement rate to increase substantially. For example, Milwaukee County has committed to hiring 50 students to fill their IT needs in the year 2000.

IT 2000 is designed to be a comprehensive, summer/year-round integrated program. Youth will be trained in occupational computer skills and will receive training in soft skills, followed by the opportunity to apply these skills in part-time IT jobs. The technology skills youth learn in the classroom are directly linked to skills required for entry-level technology jobs in the area.

IT 2000 is a good example of how the Milwaukee PIC is innovating within its long-standing STEP-UP program. In early 1999, the CEO of the Milwaukee PIC approached a dean at the UWM about partnering in a program that would train youth in the field of technology and then find internships and employment opportunities for them. The UWM dean was interested, and so the PIC CEO contacted the Director of INROADS/Wisconsin. The PIC saw a way to fulfill its mission to serve youth and provide them with a year-round employment and training program; INROADS would help youth learn occupational and employment skills, recruit the youth, and publicize the program; and UWM would provide training and be able to make contact with a new pool of potential students, many of whom are minorities. Completers of IT 2000 receive admission to UWM.

Each partner contributes resources to the relationship. The PIC provides recruiting services and the subsidized wages that the youth earn during training, while UWM and INROADS provide the actual training. The university pays UWM instructors, while INROADS utilizes both paid instructors and volunteers. Both the PIC and INROADS work together to develop employment opportunities for the completers of the training component of IT 2000. The dollar values contributed by each organization are approximately $100,000 from the PIC, $54,000 from UWM, and $10,000 from INROADS.

The primary difficulty in forming and implementing the program was simply the short time period between the initial concept in early 1999 and enrolling the first cohort in the summer of 1999. In the future, partners will start planning considerably earlier. The program staff believed that the program was successful because all the partners were kept informed concerning the project's progress and were clear concerning the program's goals and the roles of each of the partners.

Milwaukee Youth Media Project. The Milwaukee Youth Media Project (MYMP) is another specialized STEP-UP program. It involves a partnership between the Milwaukee PIC, a community-based organization (the Strive Media Institute), and a local high school (Marshall High School). The Strive Media Institute, a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster diversity in mass communication by training youth in media skills, provides a year-round experience for Milwaukee youth in the areas of television, radio, marketing, computers, and print journalism.

Strive produces an Emmy award-winning weekly teen television show called *Teen Forum* and a monthly teen magazine called *Gumbo*. Strive responded to the PIC's standard summer jobs RFP and teamed with Marshall High School, the local high school that specializes in the media, to put together a proposal for an intensive summer employment and occupational skills experience focusing on the media.

The proposal was approved by STEP-UP, and the inaugural MYMP took place in the summer of 1999 with 35 WIA-eligible youth participating. Twenty-five percent of the participants were from Strive's regular non-PIC program, 50 percent were from Marshall High School, and the remaining 25 percent were recruited by the other STEP-UP Coordinators.

Strive and a STEP-UP Coordinator held an initial orientation at the Strive facility. The youth filled out the appropriate paperwork, learned about the different positions available, completed an interest inventory, and were told about expectations regarding attendance and tardiness. They were also given the STEP-UP handbook.

The program began with 3 weeks of full-time training at Marshall High School for the 25 youth who had no previous experience with the media. The other 10 more experienced youth worked at the Strive facility where they developed the curriculum for the remainder of the program and were trained as supervisors. At both locations, youth were trained in occupational and soft skills. During the next 4 weeks, all 35 youth worked on all aspects of production, from putting together business plans, to conducting surveys at malls and festivals, to producing radio and television commercials. The work of the MYMP was reflected in *Teen Forum* and *Gumbo*.

During its first year, MYMP provided an integrated, year-round experience in several ways. Some of the participants were part of the coordinators' workload and therefore had received competency training during the previous school year, which prepared them for the specialized training and work experience in the summer. Youth were also encouraged to gain further work experience after the summer by continuing to work with Strive in the production of *Teen Forum* and *Gumbo* during the following school year, even though they would no longer be paid. It is anticipated that Strive, along with other work experience providers, will be afforded the opportunity this year to request subsidized year-round, rather than summer-only, employees in their proposals. This will enable the MYMP program to provide longer term, in-depth work experience following the participants' summer training.

This specialized STEP-UP program faced two principal difficulties. First, Strive was unable to provide the degree of close supervision believed necessary for the youth to receive the most rewarding experience. All of the Strive staff were involved in providing supervision, which put a strain on the regular Strive operations, but the executive director does not think enough supervision was provided. This year, he will either increase the number of adult supervisors or cut back on the number of youth he employs.

Second, the Strive executive director strongly believes that this is an industry that requires highly skilled workers and that the purpose of his organization is to produce highly skilled employees. Therefore, he welcomes the opportunity to employ youth year-round next year under WIA as he feels that, at minimum, 2 years are necessary for youth to even begin to be able to learn enough to get good jobs in the industry.

Assessment of Service Integration

Because the core component of the STEP-UP program—the 750 Milwaukee youth who receive training in competencies and are given the opportunity to apply these new skills in a summer job—has been an integrated service for the last 10 years, the transition to WIA will require only a few changes and will allow the PIC the opportunity to fine-tune its operation.

The Milwaukee PIC foresees making the following primary modifications in the summer/year-round STEP-UP program, under WIA:

- Change in definition of out-of-school youth: As discussed above, STEP-UP traditionally serves out-of-school youth who attend alternative high schools. With the new definition, the Milwaukee PIC will be implementing a number of strategies to find the truly out-of-school youth and will spend most of the first-year funds designated for out-of-school youth implementing mechanisms for locating these youth.

- Increased emphasis on integration by focusing on occupational clusters: Under WIA, STEP-UP will focus more on providing meaningful employment experiences for youth that meet their interests, capabilities, and career goals. This will be achieved using the following strategies:

    (1) Potential work experience providers will be awarded positions based on their adherence to the selection criteria (project-based, rewarding, work-based learning, career path, service to the community);

    (2) Because each high school in Milwaukee is a specialty school, each STEP-UP Coordinator will become a specialist in that specific area of study or career field (e.g., arts, hospitality, college-prep);

    (3) The PIC will continue to seek to form partnerships with organizations willing to provide specialized STEP-UP programs that give skills training in specific occupational areas and then help youth find employment in these areas;

(4) The PIC will continue to try to establish relationships with local apprenticeship programs; and

(5) Potential work experience providers will be allowed to request year-round employees in their proposals.

- Changes in One-Stops: Two key changes will be made in the delivery of One-Stop services for youth:

  (1) Under JTPA, the Milwaukee Job Center Networks (Milwaukee's One-Stop) served adults only and referred all youth to the Career Center. Under WIA, the PIC will begin to place a staff member responsible for youth programs in the Job Center Networks. The staff member will provide general information to youth and refer those 14 to 18 years of age to MCC for comprehensive services. Youth ages 19-21 will be served at either the Job Center Networks or MCC, depending on their preference and individual service plan.

  (2) The PIC is developing a network of electronic kiosks that will contain extensive youth employment information (scholarship information, job listings, and information on apprenticeship programs, etc.). The kiosks will be placed throughout the community, in shopping malls, Job Center Network offices, the MCC, high school computer labs, and community-based organizations.

The problems encountered in the day-to-day operation of the STEP-UP program typically involve the relationship between the STEP-UP program and the MPS high schools. Clearly, establishing an ongoing, in-school presence in MPS, even though the STEP-UP staff is not unionized or credentialed, is a major accomplishment in and of itself. The Youth Services Director believes that, at the district level, MPS views the STEP-UP program as an asset—it provides an employment service to youth that is not otherwise provided by MPS. However, in practice, keeping both sides happy during the daily operations of the program can be a challenge.

The Youth Services Director and 2 coordinators agree that the amount of cooperation the STEP-UP coordinators receive varies by school. Some school staff view STEP-UP coordinators as outsiders, not having to earn credentials like other school staff, not belonging to the union, and encroaching on counselor responsibilities. Teachers may resist cooperating with the program by not allowing STEP-UP participants time away from class to go on field trips such as to the Career Center. One coordinator said that some teachers may also see coordinators leaving the school grounds and assume that they keep "banker's hours," when in fact, coordinators often have responsibility for more than one high school and often visit employers or the PIC office for coordinator meetings. To avoid these difficulties, coordinators spend a good deal of time and energy eliciting cooperation from school staff and emphasizing that STEP-UP should be viewed as an asset, not as a competitor. One coordinator sends flyers to teachers that outline the program and her services. She also makes it a point to personally introduce herself to school staff. To show that she is a part of the school fabric, she volunteers to help teachers and administrators, attends school performances, and chaperones dances.

Another problem faced by coordinators is that they have difficulty persuading students to commit to completing the competency training. One coordinator feels that because some MPS schools do not allow STEP-UP to be a part of the curriculum and some teachers do not allow access to students during class hours, this poses difficulties for the students because they must find the time to complete the competencies training during lunch or after school. Additionally, by not allowing class time for these activities, the school is sending a message to the students that the STEP-UP program is just an extracurricular activity and is not important enough to be included in the school day. Making STEP-UP a credit course has been discussed but has not been approved by MPS.

The most innovative aspect of the STEP-UP program is that the STEP-UP coordinators are based in the high schools. Though the relationship with the schools is not perfect, the in-school presence is the most important element in providing an integrated, year-round experience for the youth. Because the coordinators have responsibilities for the alternative high schools as well, some of the coordinators spend their time in more than one school. STEP-UP would like to eventually have a full-time presence in each high school, both regular and alternative.

The other unique feature of STEP-UP is that it lends itself to the formation of smaller, more specialized versions of the program that attract partners who can contribute additional resources, as is the case in IT 2000 and the Milwaukee Youth Media Project. These specialized programs provide high-quality, intensive occupational skills training and employment experiences in a single career area, which allows students to gain a comprehensive understanding of potential career paths. It also allows the PIC to use its knowledge of the local labor market to help provide qualified workers in areas in which demand is greatest.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

STEP-UP is built upon a basic linkage with the Milwaukee school system. This relationship began over 10 years ago, when the Superintendent of MPS and the CEO of the PIC decided to join forces and start a youth employment program that included placement of employment and training coordinators in the school facilities. Each of these executives led the fight in his own organization to push the proposal through. The responsibilities of MPS include providing office space, access to student records, and keys to the building. The STEP-UP program provides its own computers, writes work permits for students finds employment opportunities, and provides work preparedness training for students.

As discussed earlier, the PIC has forged linkages and is planning to forge additional ones with local organizations. Consistent with the plan that each of their STEP-UP coordinators become specialists in a specific career area, the PIC will require that the coordinators establish relationships with the local employer organizations that correspond to their specialty. In addition, the PIC hopes to establish relationships with local labor unions that will provide clearer channels for students to obtain information about apprenticeship programs.

The PIC has made agreements with the district attorney's and public defender's offices to receive information on youth who are out of school and involved in the juvenile justice system. The Youth Services Director contacted these offices directly to ask for their cooperation. The PIC thinks this relationship will be a good source for identifying WIA out-of-school youth.

Other relationships with local agencies, such as the public housing authority, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations, are limited to providing subsidized employment in the summer.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

The STEP-UP Coordinators are responsible for all aspects of job development, placement, and followup. In the summer, the PIC also hires a full-time job development specialist to help find summer and part-time school-year jobs for participants.

Because the program has been successfully operating for 10 years, most of the local Milwaukee businesses are familiar with the program and call the schools requesting workers for part-time and summer jobs. Very few cold calls by coordinators are made, although the summer job development specialist may make some first contacts with employers. STEP-UP coordinators also go to job fairs to secure positions for Milwaukee's youth. The only difficulty in this process mentioned by the coordinator was that they sometimes find it difficult to find jobs with hours that meet child labor law requirements and do not interfere with school.

The STEP-UP coordinators refer students to jobs. Employers make the final hiring decisions. For unsubsidized jobs, the specific sequence of events in the hiring process varies by coordinator and employer. Usually, the coordinator gives the employer a list of candidates and their phone numbers, and the coordinator calls the students in for interviews. Coordinators try to refer 2 to 3 people to each private sector position. Youth obtaining subsidized summer employment are less likely to be interviewed.

Post-program followup is currently very informal in the STEP-UP program. Employers of STEP-UP participants are encouraged to call the STEP-UP coordinator if problems with employees occur. The coordinators also ensure that the youth know that they can continue to use the coordinator as a resource for finding employment through the age of 21. These informal strategies currently comprise the post-program followup. The PIC is currently discussing how to handle the new WIA mandate regarding followup.

OUTCOMES

The PIC estimates that about 80 percent of the STEP-UP participants who begin with a competency assessment actually complete the needed competencies training during the school year and then complete a summer job. Since the PIC currently equates completing the competencies and working at the summer job as a positive outcome, the positive outcome rate is also about 80 percent.

Reasons given for youth not completing the program include (a) not completing the competencies because they lost interest or could not find the time in their schedules, (b) youth found jobs on their own in the private sector during the school year, and (c) youth were negatively terminated because of grade or attendance problems.

The PIC will continue to maintain performance standards consistent with JTPA/WIA. Performance will be measured using information from WIMS, the Wisconsin Information Management System (Attachment 12). Data for post-program followup will be collected using direct contact with former participants. The PIC has not yet decided on the specific data that will be collected or on the method of maintaining direct contact.

The employer representatives interviewed believe that the STEP-UP youth are better prepared for jobs than the other youth they hire. They believe that STEP-UP youth have a better sense of long-term goals, have a more realistic expectation of work, and are less likely to be absent.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Milwaukee STEP-UP program provides a coherent and effective system of employment and training services for youth. The most important feature of this program is the presence of STEP-UP Coordinators in the 15 regular high schools in MPS, which allows for frequent contact with youth during the school year and accessibility during the summer months. The coordinators have the lead responsibility for conducting the STEP-UP program. STEP-UP currently provides an integrated summer/ year-round experience: it serves students during the school year by ensuring that they achieve competency in 7 areas, such as basic skills, career development, and job retention skills, and follows up with a summer employment experience that provides the youth with the chance to apply and sharpen the skills learned during the competency training.

The PIC is developing additional programs that specialize in certain occupational clusters that provide an even more comprehensive integrated experience because students will be trained in both basic and specific occupational skills and then will be employed in part-time jobs in those occupations.

The STEP-UP program will make some operational changes under WIA, the most important of which is locating and enrolling out-of-school youth, as defined under WIA. Also, the PIC will place a staff member specializing in youth services on site at the One-Stop Job Network Offices.

The factor that has contributed the most to STEP-UP's success is the cooperation between the MPS and the Milwaukee PIC. The relationship has overcome initial resistance from the school system, which did not want uncredentialed, non-union workers in the schools. As a result of continuing cooperation between the PIC and MPS, coordinators are available to students on a daily basis, a key factor in the program's high completion rate. Other factors cited by program staff as contributing to the success of the program include maintaining good working relationships with private industry and with community-based organizations.

The PIC believes that its successful design and implementation of the specialized STEP-UP programs, IT 2000 and the Milwaukee Youth Media Project, are attributable to being proactive in forming partnerships with other agencies and organizations. The PIC has learned that the key to forming partnerships and leveraging funds is to advance proposals in which each party has a clear idea of the benefits that will accrue to each organization. The roles and responsibilities of the partners must also be clear, and the parties must be committed to making the agreement work, sometimes having to act in good faith when details are not yet finalized. Also, the PIC CEO feels that individuals at higher levels in the organizations must become involved in order to give a partnership proposal the backing it needs to become a reality. For this reason he maintains as many high-level contacts as he can and is appointing high-level individuals to the Workforce Investment Board and the Youth Council.

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SE MINNESOTA YEAR-ROUND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM
ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Number served over a typical year	**250**
Fall 1999 IIC enrollment:	
Number in-school	**15**
Number out-of-school (JTPA Def)	**85**
Total	**100**
Fully-operational enrollment estimate:	
Number in-school	**168**
Number out-of-school (JTPA Def)	**72**
Total	**240**
In-School Youth:	
Gender:	
Male	**47%**
Female	**53%**
Race:	
White	**87%**
African-American/Black	**0%**
Hispanic	**0%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	**13%**
American Indian/Alaskan Native	**0%**
Age:	
14-15	**66%**
16-17	**20%**
18 or older	**14%**
Any welfare benefits	**0%**
UC	**0%**
Out-of-School Youth:	
Gender:	
Male	**30%**
Female	**70%**
Race:	
White	**84%**
African-American/Black	**8%**
Hispanic	**2%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	**1%**
American Indian/Alaskan Native	**5%**
Age:	
14-15	**0%**
16-17	**53%**
18 or older	**47%**
Any welfare benefits	**12%**
UC	**4%**

INTRODUCTION

The Southeast (SE) Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) Youth Services Program provides a variety of opportunities for at-risk youth to build life, work, and academic skills through a range of activities and projects during the school year and the summer. It is expected that the skills the youth learn will help them continue in secondary education, graduate from high school, and find and keep jobs when they enter the work force after graduation. The PIC provides services to youth in the form of informal one-on-one counseling, group activities, and project-based experiences. Under JTPA, approximately 30 percent of program participants had integrated summer/school-year experiences in which related school-year activities either preceded or followed their summer experience. Under WIA, the PIC plans to serve fewer youth but will provide a larger proportion of these youth with longer term services encompassing the school year and the summer months, either continuously or intermittently over a 2- to 3-year period. The goal is to serve 50 percent of the youth continuously for a year and to serve the other 50 percent intermittently over a 2- to 3-year period.

The summer experience for youth has been based on the Youth Service Corps model since 1993 and involves teams of youth participating in small-scale group activities (e.g., visiting a senior center, playing life skills games, resume writing, etc.) and larger projects, both in the classroom and in the community. The larger projects are typically community-service based (e.g., designing and painting murals on park buildings, helping build a Habitat for Humanity house). An adult team leader and a PIC counselor lead each summer team.

The PIC went from a scattered worksite summer program to a team-based, Youth Service Corps model because the Youth Services Director wanted the summer experience to be more holistic, in which the youth engaged in life, work, and academic skill development

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Services provided, II-B and II-C (no distinction between summer and school-year components)

In-School:	
Tutoring	53%
Alternative	13%
Summer employment linked	40%
Paid and unpaid work experience	20%
Occupational skills training	40%
Leadership development	0%
Supportive services	NA
Adult mentoring	NA
Followup services	NA
Guidance	7%
Job search and placement	7%
Post-placement followup	NA
Other (pre-employment skills)	53%
Outcomes:	
Complete program	90+%
Achieve positive outcomes	90+%
- Complete major level of education	
- Obtain unsubsidized employment	
- Complete program objectives	
- Return to school full-time	
Out-of-School:	
Tutoring	1%
Alternative	47%
Summer employment linked	0%
Paid and unpaid work experience	5%
Occupational skills training	9%
Leadership development	4%
Supportive services	NA
Adult mentoring	NA
Followup services	NA
Guidance	47%
Job search and placement	7%
Post-placement followup	NA
Other (pre-employment skills)	64%
Outcomes:	
Complete program	90+%
Achieve positive outcomes	90+%
- Complete major level of education	
- Obtain unsubsidized employment	
- Complete program objectives	
- Return to school full-time	

and, at the same time, gained a strong sense of community. The PIC also felt that PIC counselors and team leaders, who would supervise youth under the reoriented program, were better mentors and role models for the youth than were the work experience supervisors under the pre-1993 program.

The school-year experience for youth follows a similar pattern, but focuses more on one-on-one help and on smaller scale activities (e.g., life skills discussion groups, helping the United Way with mailouts). The school-year component is also less likely than the summer component to provide paid project-based activities.

In both the summer and school-year components, which will have a similar design under WIA, the PIC counselors try to select activities and projects that are progressively challenging in nature and require increasing levels of responsibility over time.

At the conclusion of the summer, program staff and school staff undertake a series of steps to ensure that the school year builds upon the youth's summer work experience. The youth's summer work experience is assessed, areas of continuing need are identified and activities are planned to meet these needs.

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

About 90 percent of the Youth Services Program is funded by JTPA/WIA and the state-funded youth development program, Minnesota Youth Program (MYP). The state required that the PIC submit a joint WIA and MYP plan by December 15, 1999. The state submitted the plan to the U.S. Department of Labor in January 2000. The PIC will change its name to the Workforce Investment Board.

Currently, about 85 percent of school-year participants (IIC) are out-of-school youth, as defined by JTPA, i.e., either dropouts or those enrolled in alternative schools in southeast Minnesota. When WIA is fully implemented, i.e., by July 1, 2000, students enrolled in alternative schools will be counted as in-school youth, and the PIC will use 30 percent of WIA funds to recruit and serve out-of-school youth, as defined under WIA. This will be accomplished by finding 19- to 21-year-old dropouts through the courts and social services systems and, possibly, by accessing welfare rolls. The Youth Services Director estimates that, on average, for the year-round integrated program, about 70 percent will be WIA in-school youth, and 30 percent will be WIA out-of-school youth.

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The SE Minnesota PIC operates a team-centered, project-based, year-round integrated youth program that has the following key features:

- Counselors work year-round and provide services year-round;
- Some summer youth continue with teams and activities into the fall, while others begin during the school year and continue into the summer, and others participate for a term (summer, fall, or spring), do not participate during the next term, and participate again the following term;
- The youth who continue for more than one term are often provided with progressively more challenging experiences both during the summer and school year as they continue through the program; and
- Some schools provide academic credit for these summer activities.

The Youth Services Director believes that he could achieve a more integrated and longer term experience for the youth if more of them participated off-and-on during the course of a few years. He believes the "ebb-and-flow" nature of an experience such as this would allow the youth to assimilate the experience, begin to apply some of the principles learned in his/her daily life, and then be ready for a more challenging experience during the next term. For this reason, under WIA, he will be instructing the counselors to place more emphasis on developing individual service strategies that focus on intermittent but progressively demanding experiences for each youth, even though this means serving fewer youth.

PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUTH STRATEGY

Under JTPA, the SE Minnesota PIC's Youth Services Director reported to the PIC's Program Planning Committee, which oversaw Youth Services. In December 1998, the Youth Services Director wrote a summary of WIA and presented it to the Program Planning Committee. The highlighted issues that needed to be addressed by the PIC were discussed during the PIC's spring and summer meetings. The following were the key issues discussed and resolved by the PIC in developing an implementation plan for the WIA youth program:

The option to contract for services: The SE Minnesota PIC self-delivers all youth programs. It is willing to consider the possibility of contracting out some services but feels that with its strong track record, retaining the right to self-deliver will ensure the continued quality and cohesiveness of the programs. The PIC will, however, invite other youth service providers to present concept papers in which they will describe their experience and expertise in delivering services, providing followup, and defining a continuous improvement process. From this pool, the PIC may select some organizations to submit proposals for the PIC to consider.

Establishment of a Youth Advisory Council: In early 1999, the PIC began assembling a list of candidates for the Youth Advisory Council. They were recruited from the PIC itself and from recommendations made by the Youth Services Program counselors from the 10 counties covered by SE Minnesota PIC. The Council has 12 members, 4 voting PIC members and 8 representing the groups identified in WIA legislation, including representatives of small family businesses and large organizations such as IBM and the Mayo Clinic. The Youth Advisory Council officially began its work in July 1999 and meets once a month to discuss youth-related issues.

Changes in definitions of out-of-school youth: Thirty percent of funds will be spent on locating, recruiting, and serving WIA-defined out-of-school youth. Existing contacts with the court system and family service agencies will enable the PIC to reach youth who are not in school. Further, the PIC may decide to reach out-of-school youth by enrolling 19- to 21-year-old welfare recipients into the youth programs.

New performance standards: The PIC Youth Services Director believes that the new performance measurements "provide a more comprehensive measure of the outcomes youth attain while receiving services." He feels that these standards will enhance the PIC's ability to track participant outcomes and be able to continue services over a longer period of time. Previously, the PIC determined outcomes anecdotally and through special youth surveys.

Because the PIC's youth program is small-scale, the Youth Services Director was able to write the WIA implementation plan himself, with input from the PIC's Program Planning Committee and, when it was formed, from the Youth Advisory Council.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Under JTPA, similar methods were used to recruit in-school youth and out-of-school youth. Under WIA, recruitment will continue in basically the same manner—specifically, all recruitment will be done by referral. The SE Minnesota PIC youth counselors accept referrals from a number of sources—e.g., teachers, school counselors, welfare caseworkers, court and probation officials, mental health workers, community agency workers, and foster care caseworkers. The counselors maintain strong, personal connections with social service workers and agencies in the counties they serve. As a result, there is always an available pool of referrals of truly needy youth in the area.

The majority of referrals are made for youth who are at serious risk of dropping out of school. These youth typically face multiple barriers to completing their secondary education and making a successful transition into the labor market. The PIC's policy is to serve those most in need, and the staff believes that this is best accomplished through recruiting by referral, rather than public advertising of services.

Once the counselors have a pool of referrals from which to choose, they can either: (1) choose a set of activities and/or projects, and then select the youth who would benefit the most from these activities or (2) choose the youth first, form a team, and let the youth themselves select from the approved activities and projects those that they feel will be the most beneficial. The path selected by the counselor depends upon the specific circumstances involved. Those might include age of the youth, past experiences of the youth, nature of the experience envisioned by the counselor (e.g., an introductory experience, or a more challenging project), or logistical considerations (where the youth live, transportation available, scheduling constraints). In short, the counselor selects the youth who will participate in a specific term (fall, spring, summer) based on the "fit" between the youth's needs, the circumstances, and the available activities/projects. A youth who is not selected may be selected the following term. Most of the referred youth are served at some point, although, due to budget restrictions, not all referred youth ultimately receive services.

Under WIA, out-of-school youth will still be recruited by referral. The counselors may have to be more active in soliciting referrals from agencies that are more likely to serve youth who are not enrolled in any type of school. Specifically, older youth (19-21 years of age) receiving welfare benefits and youth involved in the court and probation system will be targeted.

The PIC counselors have little problem getting enough referrals. The most difficult part of the recruitment and selection process is the logistics of organizing teams of youth in rural areas.

Transportation, scheduling, and even child care are the primary difficulties. Each counselor covers at least 2 counties in the 10-county PIC. In order to make selections and plan projects, counselors have to be tenacious in exploring all possible options for transportation and scheduling. Especially innovative ways that have worked include youth biking to a friend's house and then carpooling, having a parent drive a group of youth, renting vans, and requesting transportation from school districts. Counselors also provide transportation for youth themselves, keeping in mind that time in a car with a youth is not lost time—it allows for one-on-one interaction and guidance.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

The SE Minnesota PIC Youth Services Program is flexible in its approach to clientele. The procedures used by counselors are not rigidly prescribed by the PIC but instead allow the counselors to make initial contacts, conduct assessments, and develop individual service strategies, using techniques they have found to be effective and with which they are comfortable.

The counselors interviewed said that initial contacts with the youth and assessments rarely happen the same way twice. When counselors or summer Team Leaders first meet with the youth, they are more likely to try to make sure the youth understand that this program is voluntary and to make sure the youth are not being forced into the program. The counselors and team leaders make a math and reading assessment through a review of school records early in the process, but do not rely on a formal comprehensive assessment of all life, career, and academic skills at the beginning. They believe that they typically get "pat" answers from the youth during the first few interactions and instead prefer to establish a relationship with the youth over time.

The counselors view assessment and the development of the individual service strategy as an "ongoing, living, breathing thing" that changes as the relationship with the youth evolves over time. Although the counselors fill out general paperwork on the youth initially (Attachment 1 for an example of one counselor's form), and update it over time, the substantive nature of the service strategy and its results are found in the portfolios that the counselors, team leaders, and youth keep. The content of the portfolio and the specific records kept vary with each counselor. For example, one counselor interviewed focuses on SCANS skills and organizes the portfolio based on these skills. Different parts of the planning and implementation of the major project are detailed in the appropriate section of the portfolio (e.g., a budget for the project is in the resources section, and a script used to call city officials is in the information section).

Under WIA, the PIC will continue to allow each counselor to be flexible but will require that they focus more intensively on the design of individual service strategies to allow for the tracking of activities once services begin.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Overview of Integrated Service Delivery to Youth

The SE Minnesota Youth Services Program provides youth in the 10-county area with services that are both classroom-type and experiential; both individual and group; and cover life skills, academic skills, and work skills. Currently, in a typical year, about 250 youth are served, with about 30 percent receiving services during the summer as well as prior to the summer program or immediately after the summer program. Among youth who do receive these linked summer and school-year services, most participate in the program off-and-on over a 1-to 2-year period, with a few participating for 3 or 4 years. The youth who receive services for more than one term always work with the same counselor because the counselors are assigned geographically.

At the conclusion of the summer, program staff and school staff undertake a series of steps to ensure that the school year builds upon the youth's summer work experience. Specifically, the following steps are taken:

- Program staff review, with the youth, the portfolio of activities completed during the summer;
- Staff discuss with the youth areas of need, identified as a result of the summer experience, in which the youth requires additional help during the school year;
- Program staff and school staff meet and discuss youth's achievements during the summer and areas of continuing need;
- Program and school staff and the youth plan school year activities to meet areas of need; and
- Program and school staff cooperate in monitoring the youth's progress and provide coordinated support.

In many of the alternative school settings, the schools are particularly accommodating in ensuring that youth continue to build upon their successful summer experiences, allowing program staff to co-develop school-year activities in conjunction with school staff. Many schools provide work-based learning activities that lend themselves to continuing the positive experiences youth have had during the summer.

When possible, the counselors try to provide experiences that are progressively challenging or require increased levels of responsibility. For example, one counselor began providing services to a youth who was bilingual. The youth, apparently due to lack of effort, was failing in her classes and was also unable to maintain friendships or relationships. To begin the process of helping the youth, the counselor first placed her on a summer team with the initial goal of just completing the summer program. During the summer, the counselor got to know the youth and determined that she was intelligent and possessed a valuable skill (bilingualism), but needed more emotional counseling and adult support. During the school year, the counselor helped the youth get a mentor through the local community mentor program. The mentor met with the youth at least once a week, and the PIC counselor met with her every 2 weeks. The PIC counselor worked with her to focus on her successes and skills and to develop a more positive perspective concerning what she saw as her failures. The counselor arranged for the mentor and the youth to attend an interpreter training course, which helped build on her bilingual skills. After the school year, the youth had improved her social skills and outlook enough to be placed during the summer at the Family Learning Center, an organization that helps low-skilled Hispanic families. Her duties included providing nursery care and teaching younger children. The counselor chose this placement because (1) the youth could use her bilingual skills, which would increase her self-confidence; and (2) she still needed some adult influence and supervision, and the Center employed 9 workers, 6 of whom were adults. Over the next school year, the PIC counselor met with her about once a month just to touch base and make sure that she was making satisfactory progress in school. During the next summer, the counselor placed the youth at the local Community Action Agency in a receptionist position. The counselor knew that the youth had developed good listening and speaking skills, and would be able to give directions to clients in order to refer them to the appropriate Agency service. The youth is now maintaining a B average and has no problems at school. This youth's experience is an example of how the counselors attempt, whenever possible, to provide progressively challenging experiences as the youth develops competencies over time in the program.

The participating youth are typically divided equally between males and females, over 80 percent are white, and about two-thirds are 14-15 years of age. Under WIA, the Youth Services Director expects a 10-30 percent reduction in the number of youth served (assuming funding levels remain steady) due to the "more individualized intensive nature of WIA and our desire to provide more long-term services."

The PIC employs 4 counselors who each have responsibility for at least 2 counties and act as the primary service providers to youth during the school year and the summer for those youth who receive linked summer/school-year services. During the summer, the counselors are aided by adult team leaders, one for each team. The counselors typically have 2 or 3 teams each summer. The counselors are responsible for all aspects of program delivery—recruitment, orientation, project and activity development (with youth input), guidance, and followup. While the counselors have great flexibility in choosing the activities and projects that their youth clientele will engage in, the PIC provides two basic guidelines that the counselors must strictly adhere to when selecting and implementing services:

1. Each youth must be provided opportunities to build life, work, and academic skills. The proportion of time spent on each type of skill acquisition is guided by the age of the youth. The younger youth will spend more time on life and academic skills, while older youth will devote a larger proportion of their time to services focusing on work skills.

2. All major projects undertaken by the counselors and their groups should, to the extent possible, adhere to the following criteria the PIC has laid out for engaging youth in meaningful experiences (Attachment 2):

   - *Youth Recognition*: Youth are recognized by community via banquets, plaques, and press coverage;

   - *Impact of Project*: The project will have a long-term impact;

   - *Decision-making Process*: Youth are involved in every stage of the program from project selection to lesson planning and program evaluation;

   - *Skill Development*: Youth gain more than 5 skills which are well documented through evaluation;

   - *Human Interaction*: Youth must work with a variety of people on a daily basis in planning and executing their project; and

   - *Academic Enrichment*: Youth make meaningful progress in all major academic areas, including career and life skills development.

These criteria notwithstanding, flexibility and creativity continue to characterize actual service delivery. Flexibility is necessary because the youth served are a very diverse group in terms of income, life circumstance, and geography. Counselors can choose any mix of activities as long as they provide experiences that meet the above criteria, and they provide training needed to achieve the PIC's Youth Attainments and career-related Youth Competencies. The Youth Attainments include:

- Basic Skills (reading, writing, math, listening, speaking skills);

- Thinking Skills (creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, visualization, knowing how to learn, reasoning);

- Personal Development (responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, honesty/integrity);

- Resources (time management, money management, materials and facilities awareness, human resources);

- Team Skills (contributes to team effort, teaches skill to others, serves customer, exercises leadership, negotiates differences, works with individuals from diverse backgrounds);

- Managing Information (acquires and evaluates information, organizes and maintains information, interprets and communicates information, uses computers to process information); and

- Working With Systems (understanding systems, monitoring and correcting performance, improving and designing systems).

The Youth Competencies are 5 work-related competencies based on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (Attachment 3).

- Career Awareness;

- Preparing a Resume;

- Filling Out Applications;

- Interviewing; and

- Work Maturity/Job Readiness.

In keeping with the PIC's philosophy of flexibility and creativity, the counselors are allowed to help the youth achieve Attainments and Competencies in a variety of ways. The Attainments are usually met through the natural course of activities during the school year and the summer, and progress is documented by each counselor differently (Attachments 4 and 5). For example, to achieve the career-related Competencies, one counselor has her group put on a "Job Club Seminar" in which each youth gives a presentation on one of the competencies for the other members of the group (Attachment 6). Another counselor has the youth achieve Competencies by spending time in the computer lab using career exploration and job-readiness software, preparing resumes and completing job applications, conducting mock interviews, and visiting area businesses.

During the school year, youth participating in the program are formed into teams to work on projects and activities. Each counselor has one team in the fall and one in the spring. The youth may or may not have participated in a previous team with the same counselor. Examples of projects and activities carried out during the school year include:

- *Group Discussions*: Groups of 6-8 youth meet with the counselor at least once a week for life skills discussions. This activity is typically targeted to younger youth new to the program. It helps build rapport and trust among the youth and between the youth and the counselor.

- *Computer Class*: In this activity, youth learn to assemble a PC-clone computer and to use an integrated word processing, database, and spreadsheet software package (Attachment 7). At the end of the class, the youth keep the computers they assembled.

- *Planning and Taking a Trip to Chicago*: A group of 13 youth planned, organized, and raised funds (hot dog stand, car wash, garage sale) for a trip to Chicago. The trip included visits to museums, restaurants, and theatrical performances.

- *Remediation*: A group of 6 young women worked with their counselor to prepare for the GED.

In addition, youth meet regularly one-on-one with their counselors. The number of times youth meet with counselors per week varies, depending on the activities and the needs of the youth. During the school year, the youth typically meet with the counselors once or twice a week. Meetings take place in the counselor's offices, Workforce Centers, worksites, malls, technical colleges, or any other designated area.

One-Stop centers in SE Minnesota are called Workforce Centers and are operated using a combination of funds from JTPA, Job Service, Division of Rehabilitative Services, and Services for the Blind. Youth are invited to use the facilities to explore careers or find jobs. Usually, youth seeking services are referred by the Workforce Centers to the PIC's Youth Services Program. However, the Centers invite counselors to bring groups of youth through the facilities to learn about and make use of the Centers' career exploration and job search services.

Most of the PIC's youth services are delivered in the community with partnering agencies, and at sites where youth are readily accessible and comfortable. The physical locations of the Workforce Centers are typically utilized for computer labs and career resource materials on an as-needed basis.

Role of Summer Component in Integrated Program

The goal of the SE Minnesota PIC Youth Services Program is to provide youth with a series of graduated experiences that help them develop life, academic, and work skills that will prevent them from dropping out and enable them to secure and keep jobs after graduation. The summer program provides the youth with the opportunity either to begin skill development or to continue the process they began with the youth program during the previous school year. Because continuing youth always work with the same counselor (whether during the school year or on a summer team), their specific needs and abilities are taken into account when summer projects and activities are selected. These activities are reflected in portfolios for which some schools award academic credit.

Over 90 percent of summer youth take part in team activities that are very much like the school-year team activities, except that the youth are more likely to engage in project-based, paid experiences and are guided by a team leader who assists the PIC counselor with the administration and mentoring of the teams.

During the summer, the teams usually complete a large community-service project, and the youth participate in smaller scale activities that help them develop life, academic, and work skills. The projects are selected using the PIC-provided guidelines and, along with the smaller scale activities, typically provide youth the opportunity to meet many of the Attainments and Competencies requirements. For example, working as a team helps develop the participant's interpersonal and team skills. The youth use basic skills, thinking skills, and resource awareness when they design the project, determine what resources are necessary, and prepare a budget. They then carry out the project. In this process, they have become familiar with specific technology, worked with systems, managed information, and developed personally.

Last summer, one team, led by the counselor and a team leader, participated in the following activities over the course of the 6-week session:

- Learned basic computer skills and then used desktop publishing software to produce 7 "pages" about themselves chosen from 10 possible topics, including a variety of life issues, heritage, happy moments, family, etc. These pages were put into a binder called "My Story" and were shown to family members at the end-of-summer banquet. This activity provided an opportunity to achieve the Attainments of basic skills, thinking skills, managing information, using technology, and personal development.

- Used basic computer skills to write resumes and cover letters. This activity provided an opportunity for youth to achieve the Competencies of preparing a resume and the Attainments of basic skills, thinking skills, working with technology, and managing information.

- Played games such as The Career Game, Interview Challenge, Common Ground (conflict resolution), and the Real Game (more realistic version of Life). These activities provided an opportunity to achieve Competencies of career awareness, interviewing skills, and job readiness, along with the Attainments of basic skills, thinking skills, interpersonal and team skills, and personal development.

- Designed and participated in a Know Your Government project that included requesting, reading, and discussing state government information packets and calling the mayor to talk about city government. The mayor came to the end-of-summer banquet and gave the team a personal presentation. Each youth was required to have 3 difficult questions prepared for the mayor during the question-and-answer session. This activity provided an opportunity for youth to achieve the Attainments of basic skills, thinking skills, interpersonal and team skills, managing information, and working with systems.

- Each Wednesday afternoon, the youth visited the Senior Center and provided companionship for the seniors. Each youth chose one senior with whom to do an in-depth interview, and then the youth used his/her newly learned computer skills to produce a 1-page life story of that senior. This activity provided an opportunity for youth to achieve Attainments in basic skills, thinking skills, interpersonal and team skills, personal development, managing information, and working with systems.

- Helped in the construction of a Habitat for Humanity house. Specifically, the youth helped produce the foundation and put up a wall. This large community service project helped youth meet the Attainments of basic skills, thinking skills, personal development, managing resources, interpersonal and team skills, and working with systems.

Over the course of the summer, the team also organized and conducted a car wash fundraiser for the Hope House, a local non-profit community services organization, helped improve the walking trail at a local park, and designed and produced team T-shirts.

Other examples of community service projects in which youth have participated during the summers include painting murals in public parks, painting ice-hockey boards in public parks, helping with landscaping at an elementary school, helping prepare a BMX Race Track for weekly cyclists, and running a concession stand along a bike path.

At the end of the summer, all the teams come together for a banquet. Each team is recognized with a story board and a slide-show with music that describes its activities and accomplishments over the course of the summer. The banquet is attended by youth, parents, and members of the community.

Story of a Youth

John was recommended to the SE Minnesota PIC by a counselor at the alternative junior high school he attended. John was overweight, had long hair, and was a target for teasing. He rarely spoke to anyone, instead putting his time and energy into making dream catchers. After a number of tries, the PIC counselor finally engaged John in conversation. John's case is an excellent example of why the counselor does not do a complete initial assessment and develop an individual service plan at the very beginning. She had to establish a relationship with him first, and then she developed the service plan as the relationship grew.

The counselor believed that the most obvious deficiencies at the outset were social in nature. With that in mind, she placed John in a life skills discussion group that met once a week. It took a number of weeks before he started talking in the group, and a few more weeks before the group began to accept him.

Also during the first school year, John met with the counselor and the group twice a week to work on activities that included helping at the library, helping at a nonprofit child-care facility, and working with naturalists at the Riverbend Nature center to improve the grounds. During this time, the counselor paid close attention to John and made sure that he only participated to the extent that he was ready. At first John worked independently, still contributing to the overall project, but usually sitting alone and working on an individual task. As John and his peers became more comfortable with one another, John was able to participate in small group activities (e.g., 2 or 3 youth sitting at a table assembling ticket packets for children at a Halloween fair).

Because John had made progress in communicating and getting along with others during the school year, the counselor decided to let him interact with other youth in a less controlled environment than the discussion group and school-year activities—namely, a summer team. During John's first summer experience, he connected well with his team leader, as evidenced by his arriving early and staying late to talk with the team leader. John even made a few friends in the group. His team's summer community-service project was painting ice hockey boards at local parks. As is the case with many of the team projects, the local newspaper covered the activity, and John's picture appeared in the paper. The counselor no longer had to pay special attention to keeping John in small groups. She only had to keep an eye out for any difficult relationships that may be developing between John and his peers.

After his experience during the first year and following summer, John's social skills had improved dramatically. Because he was able to participate fully in the team activities, he also benefited from the opportunities to work on the Competencies and Attainments. The following school year, John had personally developed enough to take the initiative in requesting that his counselor enroll him in a computer class. Unfortunately, the computer class that semester was being offered by the counselor to a group of teen mothers in a nearby town. John, with his self-esteem growing, insisted on taking the class, hitched a ride with the counselor each week, and finished the class alongside the teen moms. He excelled in the class, exhibiting an aptitude for working on the computer, which would have remained hidden had he not gained confidence and developed the social skills over the first year of the program. In summer 1999, John participated in a summer team that improved a BMX bike trail for public use. John now attends a regular high school and has told his teachers that the SE Minnesota PIC youth program "changed his life."

Assessment of Service Integration

The Youth Services Director believes that, for those youth who currently receive integrated summer/school-year services (i.e., 30 percent of 240 youth, or 70 youth), the integrated approach has been very effective. Because of WIA's emphasis on integrated long-term services, the SE Minnesota PIC plans to increase the percentage of youth who receive services for more than one term. Increased emphasis on longer term services for individual youth will result in fewer youth being served. The Youth Services Director estimates that the number of youth served will be reduced by 10 to 30 percent annually. The Youth Services Director would like to see 50 percent of these youth receive continuous year-round/summer services and the other 50 percent receive intermittent services over a 2- or 3-year period.

The Youth Services Director believes that providing services on an intermittent basis over 2 to 3 years may actually improve efficiency. He indicated that the PIC could still maintain a coherent service strategy, giving the youth time to assimilate their experiences during the off months and be more ready to benefit from a more demanding experience during the next time they participate.

One problem encountered in administering the integrated program relates to the counselor's close relationship with the youth. The intimacy achieved by the counselors' relationships with the youth may result in the counselors having to deal with the youth's personal problems. However, by maintaining strong contacts with the youth's families and local social service organizations, the counselors feel they have the tools to deal with the problems.

The Director identified 3 characteristics of this integrated program that are key to its success.

1. *Criteria Guiding Project/Activities Selection*: Requiring training in the 3 skill areas (life, academic, and career) coupled with the guidelines used to select projects make for experiences that cover a variety of skills and, at the same time, keep the youth connected to the community.

2. *Flexibility and Creativity*: The flexibility valued by the counselors allows them to implement programs effectively and yet remain within financial and geographic limitations.

3. *Progressive Nature of Youth Experiences*: Each counselor considers the individual experiences of the youth and seeks to provide them with progressively challenging projects or increased responsibility over time. Under WIA, this aspect of the program will be emphasized.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

The most important linkage the SE Minnesota PIC Youth Services Program has is with the alternative schools, operated by the school districts, and the alternative learning centers, operated by the state to serve youth and adults. The alternative schools have more flexibility in the types and timing of services they provide for youth than do conventional schools, and, given that the PIC believes in flexibility and tries to serve the more at-risk youth, this makes for a good partnership. The alternative school administrators are always willing to listen to the PIC's ideas and contribute some of their own.

For example, a special education coordinator at an alternative junior high called the PIC counselor and asked for assistance with several high-risk youth. In response, the counselor developed an off-campus work program in which a group of 5-7 youth would spend 3 hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays helping maintain the Riverbend Nature Center, helping at a nonprofit child-care facility, and providing companionship at a nursing home. The PIC provided the funding and job sites, while the school district provided transportation and sack lunches. The alternative school was primarily responsible for providing supervision while the youth were on the job site, but when the school was short-staffed, the PIC counselor helped provide supervision.

The PIC counselors have extensive, although informal, relationships with other human service organizations. Most counselors attend the monthly Family Service Collaboration meetings, which are collaborations of human service agencies in the county and are designed to help target services. Simply keeping in touch with these individuals helps counselors to identify opportunities for potential partnerships. For example, one counselor has a strong informal relationship with the justice and law enforcement agencies, who paid for him to take Reasoning and Rehabilitation Training. As another example, relationships between counselors and public housing authorities led to a summer team project in which youth spent time twice a week providing recreation opportunities to children living in public housing.

According to the PIC counselors and the Youth Services Director, the key to establishing informal relationships with organizations is to establish linkages with groups that share the vision of the importance of working with truly at-risk youth. Some organizations hesitate when they realize that "those kinds of youth" will be working in their organization. The PIC has found that a potential partner has to buy into the program and its mission in order to make the partnership work.

Finally, true partnerships should always strive for the leveraging of resources. Some organizations such as schools or local community service agencies have requested that the PIC provide specific services (e.g., a computer class or life-skills group). Rather than solely provide the class, the PIC counselors encourage organizations to contribute (e.g., computers, teachers, group leaders) or to implement the project after it has been designed by the PIC. The PIC prides itself on developing effective projects that can be delivered by other organizations, and it encourages such organizations to undertake proven projects themselves.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

Youth no longer participating in the SE Minnesota PIC program typically have no trouble finding private sector jobs on their own. The Youth Services Director views the program as a youth development tool, not strictly a job training program. His goal is to help the youth develop the skills that will enable them to search for employment and find and retain stable jobs.

The SE Minnesota PIC counselors only occasionally place youth in jobs in community-based organizations or government agencies. When they do, the position is usually at an organization and with a supervisor with whom the counselor is very familiar. The organization must also be familiar with the at-risk population. The counselor takes great care to ensure that the youth's behavior and personality are a good fit with the employment position. Post-placement followup consists of the worksite supervisor filling out an evaluation form on the youth (Attachment 8), which becomes a part of the youth's file. Placement in private sector jobs is only done by request from an older youth who may be having trouble finding a job on his/her own. The counselor would make calls to his/her private employment contacts to help the youth arrange initial interviews.

OUTCOMES

The SE Minnesota PIC estimates that over 90 percent of the youth who enter the Youth Services Program complete the program. The PIC defines "completion" as completing a program that lasts at least one school term or participating as long as the counselor suggests. Among the youth who complete the program, over 90 percent achieve a positive outcome, which includes completing a major level of education, obtaining unsubsidized employment, completing program objectives, or returning to school full-time.

When youth do not complete the program or obtain positive outcomes, the reasons are usually that they have moved away, have discontinued for personal reasons such as family instability or substance abuse, or have been asked to discontinue by a PIC counselor.

The SE Minnesota PIC traditionally has evaluated itself based on anecdotal evidence and pre- and post-program attitude surveys of the youth (Attachment 9). In order to meet WIA requirements for followup and outcome evaluation, the Youth Advisory Council will be brainstorming ideas on how to maintain contact with the youth, and what specific data elements should be collected from the youth.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Youth Services Director hopes that, with the increased emphasis on more intensive individual service strategies for slightly fewer youth, the counselors will be more successful in providing progressively demanding and responsible experiences for youth over longer periods of time. Specifically, the PIC's goal is to serve half the youth continuously for one year, including the summer, and the other half intermittently, over the course of 2 or 3 years. The Youth Services Director and the counselors are currently exploring ideas for making this goal a reality. The PIC feels that achieving these service goals, coupled with retaining the right to self-deliver services, will ensure the cohesiveness and continuity that youth need to truly make developmental progress.

Maintaining continuing services over long periods of time can result in very effective service. A living example of the effectiveness of continuous services is a young man, who, after 2 years in the PIC Youth Services Program, continued with AmeriCorps right out of high school. As part of his AmeriCorps service, he started a youth service center, operated by youth, in Pine Island, MN. In October 1999, he was awarded an AmeriCorps service award at the White House by Colin Powell.

The Youth Director suggests three keys to success in youth programming, including the new WIA model of year-round, integrated services:

- *Flexibility and Creativity*: Explore every possibility in solving transportation problems, rotate projects to keep counselors fresh and to keep projects for youth appropriate, and find partners that put youth first and other issues second;

- *Consistent Vision*: Create a vision independent of the Federal program by determining how to best create opportunities for at-risk youth. First design a program, then look at how WIA addresses the program. Identify any gaps that WIA does not satisfy and look to other partners and resources to help fill in the gaps.

- *Quality People*: Find passionately committed staff, meet often, keep morale up, and keep ideas flowing.

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PIMA COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES
TUCSON, ARIZONA

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Current JTPA enrollment mix: estimated to be 80% in-school and 20% out-of-school youth: expect 70/30 to 60/40 under WIA

Summer 1999: over 3,500 youth were served in the summer youth employment program using a variety of funding sources. Approximately 550 of these youth were in the JTPA IIB program.

Between 300 and 400 youth were served in the IIC program in Program Year 1999.

Total enrollment under WIA is expected to be around 250-300 youth (more if able to leverage other resources).

Enrollment in integrated programs: 40 in school-to-work transition programs; 60 in Las Artes

Characteristics of IIB enrollees (of the 587 terminations from 10/01/98 – 09/30/99 included in the annual status report):

Gender:	
Male	**54%**
Female	**46%**
Race:	
White	**15%**
African-American	**16%**
Hispanic	**59%**
American Indian or Alaskan Native	**8%**
Asian or Pacific Islander	**2%**
Age:	
14-15	**53%**
16-17	**34%**
18 or older	**13%**
Education:	
High school dropouts	**24%**
Students (high school or less)	**75%**
High school graduate/ GED recipient/post high school attendance)	**1%**
Family receives welfare (AFDC or GA/RCA)	**10%**
Average weeks of participation:	**16.3**
Average hourly wage at termination:	**$6.46**

INTRODUCTION

Under an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Tucson, the Pima County Community Services Department (CSD) operates a consolidated employment and training system for both youth and adults city- and countywide. The system delivers services out of 6 One-Stop centers in which multiple agencies and community based organizations work together under one roof. Pima County covers 92,042 square miles and has a population of 830,000 (400,000 of whom are in the work force). More than half of the county's residents live in Tucson, which has a population of 450,000.

CSD serves both in-school and out-of-school youth through a variety of funding sources, including federal, state, county, and local. Most programs serve a mixed-income population, with only some participants eligible for JTPA/WIA. Last year, over 3,500 youth were served in the summer youth employment program. Approximately 550 of these youth were covered by JTPA IIB funds. The CSD has also operated a small IIC program, serving both in-school and out-of-school youth. As Pima County moves toward implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), it has begun to integrate year-round services into some of its programs. Of particular interest is a program model that has been piloted for in-school youth that combines a summer familiarization program with continued school-to-work activities in the students' field of interest (e.g., nursing, auto mechanics, construction) during their senior year. The Pledge-a-Job (PAJ) program, which is funded by the county, is also working toward integrated services, offering employability skills workshops during the year and then matching in-school students with after-school and summer placements pledged by private sector employers. Out-of-school youth are also eligible to participate in the PAJ program. The Las Artes program, which combines GED preparation with vocational arts training, is also available to out-of-school youth.

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Characteristics of IIC enrollees (of the 359 terminations reported from 10/01/98 – 09/30/99 on Title IIB status report)

Gender:	
Male	56%
Female	44%
Race:	
White	23%
African-American	8%
Hispanic	64%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1%
Age:	
14-15	2%
16-17	47%
18 or older	51%
Education:	
High school dropouts	47%
Students (high school or less)	35%
High school graduates or equivalent (no post-high school)	15%
Post-high school attendee	3%
Reading skills below 7th grade	19%
Barriers:	
Lack significant work history	11%
Homeless	11%
Multiple barriers to employment	25%
Unemployed 15 or more weeks of prior 26 weeks	8%
Not in labor force	75%
Welfare recipients (AFDC or GA/RCA)	14%
Long-term AFDC recipient	11%
Participation:	
Average weeks of participation	25.2
Average hourly wage at termination	$6.51
Services provided in IIC program (estimates for 98-99)	
OJT	5%
Enrolled in college	20%
Vocational training (including additional contractors)	50%
Basic education (some were in both vocational training & basic education	25%

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

Although still pending final certification from the state, the Pima County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) was established and had met twice as of the time of our visit. There are currently 51 members on the WIB. The first monthly meeting of the Board took place October 8, 1999, at which time nominations for the Youth Council were requested. At its November 19, 1999, meeting, the Board approved the establishment of a 30-member Youth Council. At least 7 Youth Council members also serve on the Pima County WIB. As of December 1, the Council's membership included representatives from business (e.g., Wells Fargo, Southwest Gas Corp.), education (e.g., Pima Community College, Sunnyside Unified School District), labor (e.g., Carpenters Apprenticeship program), public housing (e.g., City of Tucson Community Services Department), and law enforcement (e.g., South Tucson Police Department). Several service providers (e.g., SER Jobs for Progress, Tucson Youth Development, Job Corps) and intermediary agencies (e.g., School-to-Work, Tech Prep) were also represented on the Council. Despite this broad membership, the Council was still lacking youth and parent representatives.

The first meeting of the Youth Council was scheduled for December 6, 1999. Agenda items included an overview of WIA, specifically as it pertains to youth; roles and responsibilities of Council members; the timeline for designing the program and drafting the youth plan; a tentative RFP schedule; and the possibility of conducting a community education campaign. In January 2000, the Youth Council completed a draft of the youth section of the WIA plan, for which it conducted a special public input process. The Council was expected to approve the revised youth plan in early February, and then it was to be submitted to the WIB.

Approximately 80 percent of the youth currently served by Pima County Community Services are in school. With the upcoming implementation of WIA, Pima County expects to increase its enrollment of out-of-school youth from 20 percent to 30 percent or more. While the final enrollment mix will be determined by the Youth Council, program staff report that eventually out-of-school youth will likely represent 40-50 percent of the caseload.

Under WIA, Pima County plans to take a more targeted approach to recruitment and enrollment. In-school services will be targeted at students in a vocational track so that summer activities can be more readily linked to Perkins-funded programs and school-to-career activities during the school year. This approach has worked well in the programs that have been piloted to date. Overall, more focus will be

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placed on out-of-school youth than in the past. While the increased focus on dropouts is partly in response to WIA requirements, it is also a reflection of staff concern about those that they feel are most in need. Many feel that in-school youth have a connection to the community (i.e., the school) and are already getting some attention. Out-of-school youth, however, do not have these connections and are in greater need of services. While dropouts have been targeted for the summer program in the past, Pima County will now look to provide services to these high-risk youth year-round.

Pima County Community Services has had some operating experience in integrating summer and year-round services, for both in-school and out-of-school youth. Pilot programs combining a summer familiarization component followed by after-school activities have been implemented for specific industry clusters (i.e., nursing, auto mechanics, and construction). Programs targeted at out-of-school youth, such as Las Artes and Construction Works, have also taken an integrated approach to service delivery. Program staff report that while they were already making efforts to integrate services, WIA served as an impetus for them to move forward at a much faster pace.

While the state deadline for the youth portion of the plan was set at March 1, 2000, Pima County was expecting that its WIB would adopt the Youth Council's plan in mid-February. Rollout of the plan will then begin in April, with transition services into the school year for in-school youth in August. To avoid any delays in service delivery, the RFP process will overlap with the planning process, ensuring that contracted service providers are in place before the April rollout. The RFP process can take up to 3 months, including 3 weeks for the application process, 3 weeks for the review process, and 6 weeks to negotiate the contracts and get WIB approval.

PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUTH STRATEGY

The youth plan was developed by a subcommittee of the Youth Council. The plan was to be due to the state March 1, 2000, although program staff were expecting to provide a draft to the WIB on February 4 for approval and submittal to the state. The first draft of the plan was finalized in early January and was open to public comment until January 26. Development of the youth strategy will be driven by both staff and WIB/Youth Council input. While the WIB is interested in playing an active role in the change process, the interim chair of the Youth Council believes that program staff will play a critical role in putting together a template of the youth plan. Staff input will be particularly important because most Council members have not had experience with this type of planning.

Program staff report that deliberations surrounding youth issues will likely be contentious. CSD has identified several key issues to guide the planning process. Recommendations on these issues, as well as alternative options, will be provided to the Youth Council by the program staff. One of the primary issues to be decided in the planning process will be the enrollment mix of in-school and out-of-school youth. Pima County plans to take a more targeted approach to recruitment, focusing on training for certain industry groups and enrollment of those most disadvantaged (i.e., dropouts). Staff are suggesting that out-of-school youth represent 30 percent of the caseload. Providing year-round services requires more resources. Therefore, fewer youth can be served overall. With the decrease in the number of youth served because of reduced allocations for youth programs and the increased focus on dropouts, some staff feel that in-school youth will suffer. Parents and school counselors are also expected to be unhappy with the loss of a stand-alone summer program, and program staff believe these groups will also need to be educated concerning this aspect of WIA-required change.

Another issue that will be raised in the planning process is the role of contractors. Program staff have recommended that certain program functions remain in-house (i.e., performed by program staff) or be contracted out only under the supervision of in-house staff. Since year-round case management and followup services are seen as the backbone of the system, staff believe these activities should be provided by Pima County Community Services. Staff have also recommended that the PAJ program, which is county-funded, coordinate job referral and labor market information for all youth, regardless of WIA eligibility, as called for in WIA. A fee-for-service (i.e., RFQ) process would be used to contract out activities related to counseling and support services. The other WIA elements will be provided under contracts awarded through an RFP process.

The emphasis on education is another issue that will be addressed in the planning process. While the state plan calls for services to dropouts under age 18 to focus solely on "return to education" as an outcome, some of the program staff feel that education is simply not the best option for all youth. This "one size fits all" philosophy of the state is inconsistent with the approach proposed by Pima County Community Services. Instead of trying to force all youth to fit into one model, program staff prefer to look for the best match of services to meet a youth's needs. By tailoring the services to the particular needs of each participant, the program expects to have a higher success rate.

Program staff are recommending a One-Stop strategy for case management. Under this model, case management services would occur in one place rather than in each separate program. Ideally, each youth would have a single case manager assigned to the youth who would be responsible for assessment, development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and followup. Services would be driven by client needs rather than by eligibility for certain programs. It is unclear if funding will allow this approach to be implemented. However, program staff are confident that enough resources will be available if Pima County is successful in its application for a Youth Opportunity grant.

Pima County has made considerable progress in the planning process with the establishment of a Youth Council, the identification of key issues, and the development of a timeline for implementation. Its successful implementation of the planning process is attributed, in part, to the willingness of the many agencies, organizations and individuals involved to collaborate with one another. Program staff report that "turf" issues are not a problem. The WIB also conducted several rounds of goal-setting activities with a variety of stakeholders in the community, including youth. Pima County's history of dealing with youth issues is also reported to be a key factor in its success. According to the interim chair of the newly formed Youth Council, Pima County has been somewhat "ahead of the game" with respect to youth issues. More than 15 years ago, the county began thinking about setting up a youth council. A committee was set up under the existing PIC with the hope that it would evolve into a youth council. With the introduction of WIA, this plan lapsed, and the City of Tucson then started an initiative to set up a Youth Coalition. These previous efforts, prior to the enactment of WIA, demonstrate the county's interest in addressing youth issues and working to better serve the youth in the community.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

In-School Youth

The recruitment and selection of youth has always been a shared function with the agencies involved in service provision. In-school youth participating in the integrated programs in selected industry clusters are often recruited by the school's career counselors. Community Services staff also visit the schools to make presentations about the programs available, particularly the summer youth employment program. Posters, flyers, notices in the school newspapers, announcements over the school's public address system, and word of mouth are also used to recruit in-school youth. More targeted recruitment is proposed for the integrated programs. This will mean that the schools will be more involved in recruiting eligible youth. Program staff also expect to conduct less general recruitment for the summer youth employment program but rather focus on those students in vocational tracks, tech/prep, or school-to-work programs who will be matched with summer job openings in their career fields.

Out-of-School Youth

Out-of-school youth are recruited into the program primarily through referrals and word of mouth. Referrals are received from a variety of sources, including local community-based organizations (CBOs), the juvenile courts, the family self-sufficiency program, faith-based organizations, and public housing. No single contractor is responsible for recruitment, although an organization that is operating under a comprehensive contract (e.g., Urban League) may do some recruiting. In addition to agency referrals and word of mouth, program staff also visit local neighborhood centers and distribute flyers and posters to recruit youth. In the past, the program used radio and television announcements; however, these were not found to be particularly effective and were discontinued. More targeted recruitment is expected to be characteristic of the new strategy. If requested Youth Opportunity grant funding is received by the county, that source will contribute to recruitment efforts for CSD's out-of-school programming.

Assessment of Recruitment/Selection Processes

Overall, CSD has been very successful recruiting both in-school and out-of-school youth. The close working relationship that has been established with the career counselors in the local schools has helped to facilitate the recruitment process. Both CSD staff and the career counselors share the responsibility of recruiting youth for the year-round and summer programs. This active involvement of the schools has been a major factor not only in recruiting eligible youth but also in developing integrated year-long programs that build on activities and instruction provided during the school-year.

Pima County has established a very interesting recruitment mechanism for out-of-school youth through an arrangement with the juvenile court system. Using funds from the Governor's Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, a juvenile court officer has been assigned to work with CSD, recruiting youth and providing some case management services. This individual is housed part-time at a One-Stop center, working closely with the programs to help identify and refer those youth who need help the most. The assignment of a member of the juvenile court staff has been a very effective entrée into serving a particularly high-risk population. Program staff report that having "one of their own" (i.e., a juvenile court staff person rather than an outsider) assigned to the One-Stop center has made the courts more accepting of the programs and has made a significant difference in reaching these out-of-school youth.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

In the past, each youth was assessed after the intake and eligibility processes were complete. Youth participating in the year-round programs were assessed individually, while those enrolling in the summer program were assessed in a group setting. In some cases, assessments were done by the contractors for individual services, while in others, youth were referred to the One-Stop center for testing. Program staff were also responsible for assessment. With the introduction of WIA, the One-Stop centers will play a larger role in eligibility determination and assessment activities.

The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) is used statewide in Arizona to assess basic skills. In addition to the TABE, most youth complete a career interest inventory, usually the Self Directed Search (SDS). Program staff report that the SDS is somewhat problematic to use with younger youth who do not have any work experience. In the future, staff would like to replace the SDS with another tool that explores career interests at a more basic level.

Once the assessment process is completed, it is expected that all youth would meet with their case manger to develop an ISS. A standard form is used to record personal information, educational background, work experience, personal circumstances (e.g., legal issues, disability, parenting status, transportation), skills and abilities, competencies, and barriers to employment (Attachment 1). The ISS also includes sections for the proposed service/training plan, referrals, signatures, and revisions. The ISS is maintained in the youth's case file, along with test results, case manager notes, lesson plans, progress reports, competency acquisition records, and program completion certificates.

As Pima County looks to the future, it is considering a significant change in the assessment process—conducting assessment activities prior to determining eligibility. Its philosophy is that a youth is better served by first finding out what the youth's needs are and then identifying what services are available, regardless of the funding source. CSD is currently piloting a 2-week "assessment period," in which out-of-school-youth follow a standard curriculum of career exploration and employability skills entitled *"Exito 2000 / Success 2000."* This 2-week program, operating out of the One-Stop, introduces youth to a variety of issues, including communication, health education, stress management, decision making, goal setting, support systems, and job retention while also exploring the many program options available in Pima County.

SERVICES PROVIDED

As federal funding for employment and training programs for economically disadvantaged youth has decreased in recent years, Pima County has sought to identify other funding sources to provide services beyond the traditional stand-alone JTPA IIB and IIC programs. As a result, most of the youth programs serve a mixed population, including youth who are eligible for JTPA/WIA and those who are not.

Overview of Integrated Service Delivery to In-School Youth

Pima County has introduced an integrated program for in-school youth that uses a school-to-work approach. The model combines a summer familiarization component followed by after-school activities when the youth return to school. Students at magnet schools are recruited, primarily by their career counselor, in their junior year to participate in the summer familiarization program. During this program, youth receive classroom instruction and work experience in their selected trade for 30 hours per week for approximately 8 weeks. Youth are paid $5.15 an hour. Those students who continue to be interested in their field upon completion of the summer component are funneled into a school-to-work transition program during their senior year. During their senior year, youth in the integrated program participate in after-school activities 2 days a week, for 2 hours each day. In addition, the youth receive work experience, typically on Saturdays, for 6 hours each week. Students continue to receive a stipend of $5.15 per hour for their school year activities. To date, this model has been piloted in three areas—nursing, auto mechanics, and construction. Future plans call for expanding this model into other areas with job advancement opportunities (e.g., meat cutting).

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

The CNA program is the most developed of the integrated programs for in-school youth. Three years ago, a CNA summer program was introduced at Catalina High School, a magnet school for health occupations. The program was designed to build on the nursing program that students were already enrolled in. Ten youth were provided with job shadowing and work experience opportunities at local nursing homes and hospitals for the summer. The summer program was then followed by an after-school program that included after-school activities twice per week, for 2 hours each day, and 6 hours of clinical work experience on the weekend. Students were paid $5.15 per hour for 30 hours per week for the summer program and 10 hours per week for the school-year program. In the second year of the program, 30 students participated. Last year, another 30 students participated, while this year, 17 students are enrolled.

Over the years, the program has undergone some modification. First, program staff realized that the school-year activities were not well attended in May, as students prepared for graduation. As a result, the program now ends in April. Similarly, at least one local employer found that students did not want to give up their weekends to do clinical work on Saturdays. Students working at La Colina (a local nursing home) are now given the option of doing their clinical rotations during the week, either early in the morning before school or in the evenings after school. Community Services has also worked with the schools over the past few years to get the program certified. While the classroom instruction used to be contracted to Pima College (a local community college), the high school instructors are now certified to teach the program. Perhaps the most significant change that has been made over the years is the incorporation of the after-school component into the class day. Beginning this year, the after-school activities are now being offered during the last period of the school day. The teacher is provided in-kind by the school. Students will no longer receive a stipend for these hours because they will be enrolled in the program during the school day; however, they will receive high school credit for the classroom time. Other in-kind contributions from employers such as La Colina (e.g., uniforms, physicals, background checks) have also helped lower the program costs, allowing the program to serve more youth with the same budget.

Students are recruited into the program primarily by referrals from the career counselors. Program staff visit the high schools to conduct intake activities and complete JTPA eligibility forms. Although most of the students are reported to be JTPA- eligible, this program is currently funded by the School-to-Work program. The summer component is designed to be a familiarization program, giving students a chance to learn more about the field of nursing and gain some exposure to the skills required. Students participate in work experience for 30 hours each week and are paid an hourly stipend of $5.15. During the school year, the program continues with 4 hours of classroom instruction (i.e., 2-hour sessions, twice per week) and 6 hours of clinical work. The students continue to receive the stipend for program hours completed outside of the regular school day.

Near the end of the CNA program, PAJ staff conduct an employability skills workshop. Students who complete the program and are interested in enrolling in postsecondary education in the field of nursing can receive assistance from Pima County, including tuition, books, and fees. Program staff estimate that the positive termination rate[10] from this program is between 80 and 90 percent, with most youth going into jobs. Those who are hired as CNAs typically earn $6.50 per hour for an entry-level position, with a 25 percent differential for the swing shift or graveyard shift.

According to one local employer (who also serves as a worksite supervisor), the program is a great success. Of the 90 CNAs on staff at her location, she estimates that 40 of them came out of the integrated program. While annual turnover in the field is typically 150 percent, their attrition rate has been reduced to 42 percent. This success is attributed in part to the introduction of a career ladder, from unit assistant (who does not do any personal care) to CNA II. Four of the summer students from last year have been hired as unit assistants part-time during the school year to provide them with continued exposure to the workplace. Students who complete the summer program are reported to be more comfortable and self-assured in the workplace than other job entrants. Attendance is also better. In most cases, these students have exceeded the employer's expectations. Work ethic and maturity are reported to be the greatest challenges in working with these youth; however, these issues are typically worked out during the program and are no longer a concern when they are ready to be hired. Flexibility in working with the youth (e.g., offering clinicals during the week rather than on the weekend only) is critical according to this employer.

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[10] Positive terminations from the CNA program are defined as those youth who completed the program and attained 2 of 3 JTPA competencies: occupational skills, work maturity skills, and basic education. To meet the occupational skills competency, students must complete at least 90 percent of available hours (120 hours). Most participants complete 57-60 hours each of classroom and clinical work. Students must also pass the State Board certification exam, which consists of both a manual and a written test. The work maturity competency is measured with a pre-test of employability skills and a post-test measuring skills gained through work experience and the PAJ employability skills workshop. The basic education competency also relies on pre- and post-testing and includes specified increases in math and reading performance.

Auto Mechanics

In December 1998, program staff met with the vocational teachers at the local high schools to identify which trades would be of most interest to focus on if a new integrated school-to-work program were to be developed. As a result of this meeting, 2 pilot programs were implemented in March 1999 at Sunnyside High School—auto body and auto mechanics. Students were recruited with the help of a staff member of the Southern Arizona Apprenticeship Council who had many connections to the schools already. Program staff also met with local car dealerships to see if they would be willing to provide mentoring and job shadowing opportunities. It was made very clear up-front that the youth were not there as a source of labor but rather were there to learn about the trade. Four dealerships and one private auto body shop agreed to participate.

Recruitment for the March pilot began in January. Program staff went to the high school to complete the assessment (i.e., TABE, SDS) and eligibility procedures. A total of 20 students were enrolled in the pilot program, 10 in auto mechanics and 10 in auto body. Half were juniors, and half were seniors. The majority of students were JTPA-eligible and were covered by IIC funds. The remaining few (perhaps two or three students) were not eligible and were therefore covered by the county's general funds.

The program operated for approximately 8 weeks, from March to May. Students met after school twice per week, for 2 hours each session. Shop teachers from the high school were hired by the program as independent contractors to provide the classroom instruction. Students also spent 6 hours each Saturday at the dealership. Participants received a stipend of $5.15 per hour for 10 hours per week. They were also provided with tools (paid for by the County) and uniforms (provided by the dealerships).

At the end of the program, the juniors who were interested in continuing and were recommended by the instructor were enrolled in the summer program. All 10 of the seniors graduated—4 went on to work for the dealerships, and 3 received scholarships to attend technical college.

The summer program began in June 1999 with 15 students, some of whom had participated in the school-year pilot and others who were recruited from other area high schools. Program funds were used to pay for a summer school class at Sunnyside High School, which included the instructor costs and shop space. As a result of only limited demand for auto body, the summer program focused exclusively on auto mechanics.

The program ran from June through August (approximately 8 weeks). Students attended class 4 days per week (Monday through Thursday) for 6 hours each day and received hands-on work experience at the dealerships on Saturday for 6 hours. In addition to the stipend of $5.15 per hour, students also received high school credit for the summer course. At the end of the summer, some of the dealerships wanted to hire the students full-time. However, participation in the program was based on the agreement that the youth would return to school for their senior year. A few of the students have been hired to work part-time, after-school or on weekends at the dealerships. In November, the youth were given the opportunity to apply the knowledge they had learned by taking the national certification exam for the automotive industry (i.e., ASE) in a selected specialty area (e.g., air conditioning). In April 2000, the students will be eligible to take the exam again and be certified in another specialty area.

In January 2000, the school-year program will begin again with 15 students. Approximately half of the participants will be youth who are continuing from the summer program. The remaining half will be new participants (seniors) who have been participating in an auto mechanics program at school for the past 4 years. Given their experience and training (both in-school and on-the-job), all youth in this program component will receive a more advanced curriculum, including engine diagnostics.

Construction

For the past 3 summers, Pima County has offered a summer program to introduce youth to the construction trades. Approximately 12 students are recruited each summer by instructors and career counselors from a variety of schools. Although not a requirement to participate in the program, most youth are reported to be JTPA-eligible.

The summer program lasts between 8 and 10 weeks, beginning with a brief orientation on the first day to review expectations, rules and responsibilities, and administrative policies. Classroom instruction begins with safety training (e.g., OSHA training) provided by the Arizona Carpenter's Union. When classroom instruction is complete, participants get hands-on experience working on local Habitat for Humanity homes. Youth receive $5.15 an hour for 30 hours each week. In addition, boots and tools are provided. A case manager from Community Services visits the site each week to meet with the instructors and talk to students. To improve the connection between the summer program and the school year, teachers from the referring high schools are paid by their schools to come on-site for 2 weeks during the summer to observe what the students are learning. This provides teachers with the opportunity to see how they can apply this knowledge in their classroom instruction.

Beginning in January 2000, the after-school component will be added to the summer construction program. Students who are interested in continuing and are recommended by the journeyman will attend Pima Community College after-school 2 days each week, for 2 hours each day, to take an introductory course in the construction trades. Saturdays will be spent working at Habitat for Humanity. Near the end of the program, participants will attend an employability skills workshop to better prepare them for the transition to the work world.

At the end of the program, youth can apply for the apprenticeship program with the Arizona Carpenter's Union. If accepted, the youth will enter the program as apprentices based on their past experience, rather than as pre-apprentices. This not only reduces the number of hours needed to complete the apprenticeship program but also means the youth will earn a higher wage at entry.

Integrated Service Delivery for Youth in Alternative Schools

In addition to offering integrated school-to-work programs to in-school youth in selected career clusters, Pima County has implemented an integrated program for youth in an alternative school in a rural area outside of Tucson. The Marana Construction Works program started in January 1999 with 16 youth enrolled at Marana Plus, an alternative school operated by the Marana School District. A second cohort was enrolled in August, with 17 youth participating. While recruiting the initial cohort was somewhat difficult, the principal reports that recruitment is no longer a problem. Referrals are received from counselors at both of the local high schools in Marana as well as from the staff at Marana Plus. Some students choose the program for the hands-on experience, while others are attracted by the opportunity to earn income. Some are reported to enroll because of the GED component.

The 17-week program combines alternating weeks of regular academic instruction and hands-on experience on a construction site. Although the program is not restricted to JTPA eligible youth, most participants are eligible for free lunch under the National School Lunch Program and therefore would likely meet JTPA eligibility requirements. Funding for the project comes from several sources, including JTPA, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), County General Funds, and the Pima County HOME program (an affordable housing program supported by Housing and Urban Development). Students receive a weekly stipend of $75 and school credit for full attendance in the hands-on component. In addition to the stipend, students receive work boots and tools. Students must make academic progress to continue in the program. If they are behind in school, they are not allowed to go to the job site. They will also be dropped from the program if they have more than 10 absences in the semester.

The hands-on component of the program begins with 2 weeks of OSHA safety training, including an introduction to using the tools. Students then work with a journeyman from the Arizona Carpenter's Union, building low-income housing for the town of Marana. On the job site, students do general framing and finish work (e.g., installing trim, hanging cabinets, etc). A case manager from Community Services visits the site weekly to meet with students; monitor their progress; and discuss any problems or concerns with teachers, the journeyman, or the principal. The journeyman signs off on the timesheets weekly and completes an evaluation of each student's competencies at the end of the program.

This past year, students who completed the combined classroom/on-site program were offered full-time summer employment to complete 2 new houses for an affordable home ownership program. Six students participated in the summer, working 30 hours per week for 6 weeks at $5.15 per hour. After successfully completing the program, students are also eligible to receive assistance (i.e., tuition) to pursue postsecondary education. Interested participants who are recommended by the journeyman are encouraged to apply for the carpenters' apprenticeship program. If they are accepted, the Carpenters Union will accept their hands-on experience to satisfy the 500 hours of pre-apprenticeship requirements. This means that the youth would enter the program as an apprentice (rather than as a pre-apprentice) and would receive a higher starting wage.

The carpenter who is currently working with the youth in Marana has been a journeyman for over 20 years and has been involved in summer youth programs before. In addition to providing hands-on instruction, he stresses the importance of attending school and reminds the youth that they will need to complete their education to pass the apprenticeship exam. Although the youth are similar in age to most pre-apprentices, the major difference in training them, according to the journeyman, is that the youth are still in school and are not available full-time. Other than that, he reports that the youth are no different from other pre-apprentices he has worked with.

Students participating in the Marana Construction Works program reported that they enjoy being on the worksite. Some even said that attending school "isn't too bad" since they don't have to go every week. According to youth participating in the program, it is critical to have a good foreman (i.e., journeyman) who is willing to teach the students. The youth also reported that is important to have strict rules on the job site to prevent them from "slacking off."

Overall, the program is reported to be a "win-win" situation for the town of Marana. Not only are students being trained and acquiring useful skills, but high-quality low-income housing is being developed at the same time.

Overview of Integrated Service Delivery to Out-of-School Youth

Although initiated as a summer program, the Las Artes Vocational Arts and Education Project became a year-round offering beginning in the mid-1990s. This program targets out-of-school youth who are at high risk of criminal involvement and substance abuse. The program, which serves approximately 60 youth each year, combines vocational arts training in tile setting with basic education and GED preparation and involves youth in the community revitalization program through the creation of public art. Upon entering the program, youth are tested at the One-Stop center using the TABE and are grouped by skill level for enrollment into one of 4 program phases:

- Youth who test between the 5th and 7th grade levels are enrolled in pre-basic education. Services are provided under contract by SER-Jobs for Progress at an off-site location. The youth are retested periodically to determine their current reading level. When the youth are reading at the 7th grade level, they are eligible to move on to the next phase of the program. This pre-basic education program component is scheduled to last up to 8 weeks.

- Youth who test between the 7th and 9th grade levels are enrolled in basic education. These services are also provided by SER at a different off-site location. When the youth have improved to a 9th grade level, they are eligible to move on to the next phase of the program. This program component is scheduled to last up to 8 weeks.

- The Arts component lasts 7 weeks and is open to youth reading at the 9th grade level or higher. Youth work in small groups under the direction of a professional artist to design and complete mosaic tile murals to beautify public thoroughfares, parks, and facilities. While youth may gain some tile work experience in this part of the program, this component is actually designed to address teambuilding, self-confidence, respect, and work ethic rather than job skills. There is no set curriculum in the Arts component. Instead, youth work in small groups doing a variety of jobs (e.g., filling molds, sketching designs, painting tiles, setting tiles) depending on what work needs to be done.

- Youth who have completed the Arts component of the program and are reading at the 9th grade level or higher are enrolled in the GED preparation phase. Classes are offered on-site, along with computers equipped with self-paced GED preparation software. In addition to GED preparation, youth also receive instruction in CPR, first aid, money management, career development, and employability skills. This program component is scheduled to last 8 weeks.

When the program was first started, youth were enrolled directly into the Arts component for 7 weeks, followed by 8 weeks of GED preparation. Program staff quickly realized that many youth were not ready for this level of instruction. In fact, of the 166 youth who were tested in the first cohort, only 15 were reading at the 9th grade level. With only 8 weeks to prepare for the GED, the program was setting many of the students up for failure. To remedy this situation, the program model was revised to include the adult basic education and pre-adult basic education components.

Youth are recruited for the Las Artes program in a variety of ways, including word of mouth and referrals from law enforcement, CBOs, schools and the Kino Teen Center. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is the primary source of referrals, through the help of the court liaison who is assigned to work at the One-Stop center. Approximately 75 percent of Las Artes participants are court referred.

Although all of the youth enrolled in the program are JTPA-eligible, the program relies on a variety of funding sources, including state and local juvenile justice funds as well as infrastructure improvement funds. In addition to JTPA IIB and IIC funds, the program is supported by funds from State Highway User Revenue Fees, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Arizona Governor's Office, the City of South Tucson, Pima County Juvenile Court, and county bond revenue.

Youth enrolled in the program are paid a stipend equal to minimum wage. However, they are paid $50 per week during the program with a balloon payment at the end to make up the difference. A case manager is available on-site to make referrals for support services, update participants' ISS, and distribute paychecks. The case manager also works closely with the job developer (under a contract with the Urban League) to find job placements for the youth at the completion of the program. Very few youth drop out of the Las Artes program, and staff report that dropouts are most likely due to parole violations. While there are no data to indicate the number of students who complete each phase of the Las Artes program or the number who are placed in jobs, program staff report that 85 percent of the youth who have taken the GED in the past 3 years have passed the exam.

The success of the Las Artes program is attributed in part to the flexible approach staff take in serving this high-risk population. The informal hands-on approach to the Arts component is also seen by the staff as critical to the success of the program. According to one of the artists, no time is wasted on unnecessary administrative paperwork. Instead, the staff can focus more on working with the youth and building on their strengths. Staff also believe that the individualized learning software they have begun to use (New Century Education Integrated Instructional System) is a valuable tool in the educational process. It is being used with youth at all three levels—pre-basic, basic, and GED preparation.

Las Artes participants speak very highly of the program. Youth reported that the staff are flexible and really care about them, unlike some of the teachers they had in school who didn't take the time to work with them individually. Some liked the Las Artes program because it is specifically geared toward youth, unlike other GED courses they had taken at local adult education centers. The self-paced computerized software and the weekly stipend were also noted as strengths of the program. In addition to working towards their GED, youth identified cooperation, teamwork, and self-esteem as the most useful skills gained from the Las Artes project.

Role of Summer Component in Integrated Program

While the SDA has moved certain projects, such as those discussed above, into a year-round mode, the Summer Youth Employment Program is still seen as a stand-alone effort for most youth. Because the summer program serves a mixed population (i.e., JTPA/WIA-eligibles and non-eligibles), program staff expect that the city and county will continue to conduct stand-alone summer programs using non-WIA funds while WIA-eligible youth will increasingly be enrolled in vocationally oriented, integrated summer/school year programs.

Role of Contractors/Program Staff in Integrated Program

SER-Jobs for Progress and the Urban League provide education and job development services in the integrated program for out-of-school youth (i.e., Las Artes), with much coordination and case management provided by County staff out of the One-Step. The local school districts, through in-kind support and involvement, provide integrated services for in-school youth. For the CNA program, Pima County has contracted with Pima Community College Center for Training and Development (CTD). For the integrated construction program, the Arizona Carpenter's Union is contracted to provide instruction and supervision. Recruitment and case management of youth in the in-school programs are provided by Community Services staff.

Assessment of Service Integration

Program staff report that service integration has been facilitated by the cooperation and collaboration of the various agencies and organizations serving youth. A strong rapport and a successful record have also contributed to the good reputation that the integrated youth programs enjoy in the community. Community Services has established strong partnerships and linkages with the county's schools, colleges, and employers. The assignment of a juvenile court officer to work with the youth programs who is housed part time at the One-Stop center has been a particularly effective approach to serving the out-of-school population.

In developing the integrated program model for in-school youth, Pima County built on the services students were already receiving. By focusing on selected vocational areas, Community Services was able to provide work experience and enhanced instruction in nursing, auto mechanics and construction. For example, the CNA program was developed initially within the Health Occupations Program magnet school curriculum. The Carpenter's Union involvement was an addition to an existing internship program already in place.

Plans for the future call for expanding this program model into other areas with job advancement opportunities (e.g., meat cutting, autobody technology, culinary arts) and using vocational education courses and the expanding charter schools in Pima County. Currently, two juniors are participating in a pilot program in meat cutting/processing, attending classes and getting hands-on experience at the University of Arizona's School of Agriculture. CSD hopes to enroll two more students in the program in February with funds from a state grant. Depending on future funding, CSD hopes to introduce a summer familiarization program in meat cutting/processing for approximately 5 students, who would then continue receiving services during the school year (similar to the year-round model for CNA training). Beginning in February, an auto body technology program is being added to the school-to-work program at Sunnyside High School. Plans call for 8 to 10 students to receive after-school instruction 4 days per week and hands-on experience on Saturdays with local dealerships (e.g., Jim Click Ford, Holmes Tuttle Ford, Bill Breck Dodge and Nissan). The proposed culinary arts program is being developed for implementation this summer at Marana High School. The program will serve 10 juniors in a 6-week summer program (30 hours per week), followed by an after-school component (18 hours per week) offered during the subsequent school year. Although funding for this program has not yet been finalized, WIA may be a possibility depending on the eligibility of the youth who enroll.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

Pima County has established linkages with a wide variety of partners and programs, including the local school systems. Community Services has worked closely with several local high schools (e.g., Catalina, Sunnyside, Desert View) to offer integrated school-to-work programs, with career counselors doing the majority of the recruiting. Some schools also provide faculty and/or space for the integrated program. One school district has incorporated the Certified Nursing Assistant program into the final period of the day and is offering class credit for the time.

In addition to collaborating with the schools, Pima County Community Services has also worked with a variety of labor market intermediaries. The Job Service has located staff at the One-Stop centers and has been engaged to provide services on a fee-for-service basis. While the Job Service has been focused primarily on adult clients, a representative was housed at the Kino Teen Center (one of Pima County's 6 One-Stops) last year. It is unclear what role the Job Service will play in the youth programs as Pima County moves toward implementation of WIA.

Pima County has established strong linkages to the private sector, particularly through the PAJ program, which is discussed in more detail in the next section on job development. The Chamber of Commerce is represented on the PAJ Board and provides business volunteers to go into the local schools and give presentations as part of the Chamber's Business Education Program. Representatives from various employer associations in selected industry clusters (e.g., teleservices, optics, information technology) serve on the WIB and are involved with the PAJ program. Community Services has also worked closely with the Arizona Carpenter's Union to offer integrated youth programs.

In addition to the labor market linkages that have been established, Pima County Community Services has developed working relationships with a variety of other agencies and organizations. One of the most innovative partnerships is the arrangement with the juvenile court system, where a juvenile officer has been assigned to work with the youth programs and is housed at least part-time at the One-Stop Centers. This arrangement has proved to be a particularly effective mechanism for serving the out-of-school population. Program staff report that having "one of their own" (i.e., a juvenile court employee) assigned to serve in this role has worked well as a management strategy and has served as a bridge between the agencies which had previously operated independently of one another.

Linkages with various CBOs, faith-based organizations, and Job Corps have also served as a source of referrals for the youth programs. The Pima County Interfaith Council has been a strong advocate for more local funding for job training. Community Services has worked closely with them on a dropout prevention program that involved after school work experience with oversight from parents or parent groups. Community Services is linked to the Public Housing Authority through the Connie Chambers Project, in which area youth are documenting and publishing the history of one of the aging public housing units that is being torn down.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

As Pima County moves toward implementation of WIA, program staff anticipate that the PAJ program will play a critical role in providing job development and placement services for youth. The PAJ program was initiated in 1992 to reach out to the private sector to expand the summer employment opportunities for youth ages 16 to 21. Prior to summer job placement, youth attend an employability skills workshop to learn how to be successful in finding and maintaining a job. Topics covered include how to fill out a job application, interviewing skills, how to present yourself, and customer service skills. Each participant then meets with a PAJ staff member to discuss job interests and any potential barriers to employment (e.g., transportation). Youth are matched and referred to job openings pledged by private sector employers. Several qualified applicants may be referred to any given employer; therefore, the youth must interview for the job. If one of the youth is hired, PAJ staff follow up with the employer 2 weeks after the placement to determine if the youth is still employed there and to see how things are working out. Employers are asked about the youth's punctuality, customer service skills, work quality, and attitude. At the end of the summer, employers and youth are surveyed about their experience (Attachment 2).

In the mid 1990s, the PAJ program began to operate year-round. In addition to identifying summer job opportunities, PAJ also places in-school youth in part-time positions after school and on weekends and provides them with employability skills training before they enter employment. Of the 507 youth served by PAJ last year, 105 were served year-round, while the others were in summer placements only. While services are primarily offered at the Kino Teen Center, PAJ staff have offered the employability skills training at the local schools when requested. In addition to the employability skills training, the PAJ program also provides specialized training (e.g., telemarketing) periodically. Although initially designed to serve youth who were not eligible for federally funded programs, PAJ currently serves all youth.

PAJ has played a key role in developing jobs in the private sector. With an active 12-member Board that meets every other month, the PAJ program has grown over the years from a summer program that placed 100 youth in 1992 with 50 participating companies to a year-long program that placed over 500 youth in 1999 with more than 150 employers participating. Under WIA, PAJ is expected to become the primary provider of post-program placement for Pima County youth. Youth will be screened through the One-Stops, receive needed services through a variety of options, and then be assisted in final employability readiness skills development and job search and placement through PAJ. Under this new approach, the County will likely serve fewer youth but will provide more individualized service.

While cash and in-kind contributions are donated by some businesses, Pledge-a-Job, Inc.—a non-profit corporation formed in 1998—is funded primarily by Pima County. Sponsoring agencies include the Pima County WIB, the Pima County Board of Supervisors, the City of Tucson, and the Pima County and Santa Cruz Counties School-to-Work Partnership.

OUTCOMES

Data on completions and positive outcome rates are difficult to determine in Pima County due to the mixed enrollment in most youth programs, the varied reporting requirements across funding sources, and the antiquated data management system used for JTPA tracking. The DOS-based system currently in place in Pima County does not allow for queries at the program level. As a result, most of the outcome data that are available are anecdotal. For example, the Las Artes program reports an 85 percent success rate among youth who have taken the GED in the past 3 years. However, the data system is unable to report how many youth completed each of the program stages. Similarly, the case manager who oversees the school-to-work programs reports that the programs are very successful, with very little attrition and most youth continuing from the summer into the school year activities. However, this cannot be documented from the data system.

A state task force has been formed to upgrade the current DOS-based data system to a Windows-based system that will be more responsive the WIA reporting requirements. The new system is expected to be in place by April 1, 2000. Once the new system is operational, the SDA will explore the possibility of modifying it to meet their own information needs (e.g., add-on module for program-specific queries). The hope is that the new system will allow for unduplicated counts of youth across programs and will serve as a tool for case management at the individual level. Despite the improvements the new system promises, program staff report that tracking outcomes will still be very difficult because the schools do not use the youth's Social Security number as a unique identifier. This issue is being discussed by the state, but the outlook remains uncertain.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

With the school-to-work transition model that has been piloted, Pima County has introduced an integrated program that provides a coherent system of services to youth that are linked to their in-school activities. The use of the One-Stop centers to offer a range of services to youth under one roof is also a critical component of their philosophy to meet the needs of each youth, regardless of funding source. The opportunity to provide youth with the experience of going through program components that are linked in succession is seen as a significant improvement. In the past, youth may have been served multiple times, by multiple agencies, resulting in disjointed and sometimes duplicative, service delivery. While a more integrated approach will certainly serve youth better, tracking service delivery across agencies and sites will be a significant challenge in Pima County. Based on its experience operating integrated programs, Pima County CSD has identified several lessons learned that may be helpful for others to consider as they transition to WIA:

- Leveraging funds beyond JTPA/WIA is critical to meeting the needs of youth. Agencies and organizations must work together collaboratively, putting their "turf" issues aside, to ensure that youth receive a comprehensive, non-duplicative, array of services. For example, CSD has established close working relationships with the schools and the juvenile court system to identify and recruit eligible youth.

- Focus on what youth need rather than what they are eligible for. Providing services based on categorical eligibility may not provide an individual with what he/she truly needs. Instead, program staff believe that a youth is better served by first finding out what his/her needs are and then identifying what services are available, regardless of the funding source.

- It is important to tailor services to meet the needs and abilities of youth. The "one size fits all" philosophy simply does not work. Programs should be designed to help youth succeed rather than set them up for failure. Individualized, self-directed software and program components targeted at specific skill levels have proven to be very useful in helping students successfully complete the Las Artes program. The flexibility of program staff, particularly those dealing with out-of-school youth, has also been important.

- There is no need to "reinvent the wheel." Build on activities and services that already exist. The summer familiarization model that builds on the school-to-work program has worked well in providing youths with a clear link between summer and school-year activities.

- When designing programs for youth, it is important to identify career areas with growth potential. If a career ladder does not already exist in a particular field, local employers in that field may find it necessary to develop one in order to be competitive and keep their employees.

- A Windows-based data management system that is accessible to staff in the field is necessary to document program services and outcomes. The system should also be flexible enough to capture local program data to allow for specialized queries. Ideally, the system would serve as a case management tool rather than solely as a mechanism to meet reporting requirements.

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SAN DIEGO WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
(based on data from 07/01/99 – 11/30/99)

	In-School Enrollees	Out-of-School Enrollees
Current number of youth in year-long internship programs	189	296
Projected number of youth in year-long internship programs	426	410
Demographic Characteristics		
Gender:		
Males	42%	49%
Females	58%	51%
Race:		
White	14%	17%
African American	48%	13%
Hispanic	28%	64%
Asian/Pacific Islander	10%	5%
American Indian	1%	1%
Age:		
14-15	30%	0%
16-17	65%	44%
18+	5%	56%
Documented Benefits:		
Receive any services	38%	35%
AFDC or TANF	38 %	14%
Food Stamps	32%	12%
SSI	10%	5%
Unemployment Comp.	0%	2%
*Education:		
High school dropout		25%
High school graduate or GED, no college		25%
High school graduate or GED, some college		2%
Employment Status Prior to Program Enrollment:		
Employed, full-time		1%
Employed, part-time		4%
Unemployed		23%
Out of the labor force (not employed or actively seeking)		72%

* JTPA definition in place until July 1, 2000.

INTRODUCTION

The San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP), Inc. is a large nonprofit community corporation that has provided services to San Diego City and County for more than 25 years. The SDWP (formerly the San Diego Consortium and Private Industry Council) serves as the region's "broker" for workforce development services, providing a structure that brings together employers, potential workers, and service providers. The SDWP serves all of San Diego County, which is both large and diverse, combining rural, urban, and suburban populations and including widespread racial, ethnic, and cultural differences. Consequently, a broad range of programs is required to meet the demands of the region.

The SDWP contracts for services for in-school youth and out-of-school youth, both year-round and in the summer. Prior to 1998, San Diego utilized a "continuum of services" model in which eligible youth would move between JTPA IIB and IIC programs. In December 1998, San Diego began developing a plan for integrated, year-round services for youth under WIA. An RFP was issued by SDWP to identify contractors who could conduct year-round coordinated programs for in-school or out-of-school youth.

This report describes 2 separate program models to provide integrated services to youth. The first model is a 12-month internship program that includes graduated levels of service with a school-to-career focus. The second model is a shorter-term, summer-only internship, supplemented with followup services and enhancement activities during the school year. The first round of integrated year-long internship programs was recently funded, while the integrated summer programs are expected to begin in summer 2000. While most of the structures are now in place to provide year-long integrated services, many of the contracted service providers have not yet started or are just now beginning to implement the new guidelines. Therefore, this discussion is based more on what will be in place

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Total enrolled in 1999 Summer program	**1,504**
Estimated enrollment Summer YouthForce 2000 (this number is only for the integrated program and does not include youth enrolled in other summer offerings such as Learn and Earn)	**480**
Outcomes (based on FY98-99 data – 07/01/98 – 06/30/99)	
Completion Rates:	
In-School	**33%**
Out-of-School	**35%**
Positive Outcome Rates:	
In-School Rates	**73%**
Out-of-School Rates	**73%**

when the new program guidelines are fully operational than on what has been offered in the past.

Year-Long Programs

Under this new youth strategy, all youth training programs funded by the Partnership will now follow a school-to-career model. The new year-long format emphasizes career exploration in a field of interest, academic performance and work experience. Internship opportunities are a key component of all programs. Over a 12-month period, youth will participate in 3 graduated levels of work-based learning:

- Level I—Youth at risk of dropping out of school receive introductory pre-employment/work maturity skills training and are placed in subsidized or employer-paid entry level internships
- Level II—Youth receive in-depth pre-employment/work maturity training and either classroom training or an internship, depending on individual need
- Level III—Thirty percent of the participants completing Levels I and II will enter into an employer-paid internship utilizing skills learned in Levels I and II

While some service providers may choose to start the program with a summer internship component, this is not always the case. Services are provided on a year-round basis and may or may not include a specific summer component.

The year-long program is designed to serve youth with significant barriers, including dropouts, youth in foster care, and youth with basic skills deficiencies. In-school youth ages 14-18 who are at risk of dropping out of school, and 16- and 17-year-olds attending alternative schools will be encouraged to remain in school and will be prepared for successful transition to work. Youth ages 16 and 17 who have dropped out of school will be encouraged to return to school. Dropouts who are 18-21 will obtain their GED and be prepared for employment.

Summer Program

In addition to introducing a new model to structure year-long programs for youth, SDWP is also modifying its summer program (Summer YouthForce) to better align with WIA requirements. The new summer program is targeted toward in-school youth, ages 14-16, who are at risk of dropping out and have no work experience. Dropout prevention is the central goal of this program. Activities that help them remain in school are emphasized. Youth in this program will participate in a 6-week internship in their career interest area during the summer. For the first time this year, youth participating in this program will now receive followup services and participate in enhancement activities during the subsequent school year. After returning to school, youth will complete a reflective exercise on their summer experience (e.g., in the form of a report written about their summer project). They will receive followup services—for example, additional career assessments to see if career goals change as a result of the summer experience, visits to a career center, tutoring, study skills instruction, mentorship programs, leadership skills and/or life skills training.

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STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

The San Diego Workforce Partnership, with its strong school-to-career focus, has positioned itself to serve as the guiding force for workforce development in San Diego County. In an effort to serve a very diverse client population with varying needs, SDWP has adopted a comprehensive approach to workforce readiness. WIA is seen as only one component of this approach; a Youth Opportunity Area grant that the Workforce Partnership received in 1999 is also an integral part of the plan to serve San Diego's youth.

There are currently 6 One-Stop centers operating in San Diego County. Under WIA, 5 of these centers will be contracted out to various agencies or organizations, while one—the "Center for Workforce Innovation"—will remain under the direction of the SDWP and will serve as a test site or "incubator" for new approaches and "workforce solutions." The One-Stop career center system is central to the workforce development strategy for all San Diego County youth, whether they are WIA-eligible or not. These Career Centers will provide employment-related information and self-service tools for all youth. Information will be available through personal visits to the One-Stop centers or via the virtual One-Stop that is being developed on-line.

A Workforce Investment Board and a Youth Council have been established to facilitate the transition process from JTPA to WIA. One of the major changes expected under WIA is a change in the enrollment mix of in-school and out-of-school youth in SDWP contracted programs. Last year, approximately 50 percent of the funds were spent on in-school youth and 50 percent on out-of-school youth (as defined by JTPA). With the new WIA definition of out-of-school youth (i.e., youth in alternative schools will no longer be considered out-of-school), program staff expect that the fund distribution will be closer to 70 percent for in-school youth and 30 percent for out-of-school youth. Some staff report that this change in definition will help to identify and serve youth who are "truly out of school." At the same time, there is some concern that the expected reduction of funds from 50 percent to 30 percent targeted at out-of-school youth, along with increased outcome expectations, may make it difficult to meet performance standards.

San Diego's plan for providing year-long services for in-school and out-of-school youth is outlined in an RFP that was issued in spring 1999. Several contracts were awarded, and year-round programs are currently underway.

PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUTH STRATEGY

For the past 5 years, the School-to-Career Partnership Executive Committee has provided guidance and leadership to SDWP on school-to-career (STC) activities. With the end of the STC grant and the introduction of WIA, a decision was made to set up a single body to oversee youth issues. A 40-member Youth Council was established to serve all youth (i.e., not just those who are WIA-eligible), with many members of the former STC Executive Committee now serving on the Youth Council. Membership on the Council has been expanded beyond the WIA requirements to include chief officers and other representatives from business and education. There are no standing committees planned; instead, task forces will be set up as needed to address specific issues that arise. The Youth Council is co-chaired by the chair of the Business Roundtable for Education and the president of the Board of Education, San Diego City Schools.

According to program staff, one of the greatest challenges in forming the Youth Council was to ensure that the needs of all youth throughout San Diego County would be identified and considered. San Diego County covers a large area (the size of Connecticut) with extremely diverse populations, resources, and needs. To reflect this diversity, SDWP is adopting a model being used in its Youth Opportunity program that brings many partners to the table to identify the best ways to collaboratively serve youth. In the long term, this model calls for a large, diverse Youth Council with representatives from all over the county working with smaller regional boards who understand the needs of youth at the community level. There has also been an attempt to involve many high-level individuals working at the county level to help keep the Council focused on policy.

The first meeting of the Youth Council was held in January 2000. At that time, the youth plan developed by program staff was reviewed. Performance measures will be one of the major issues that the Youth Council must deal with in its planning process. Program staff are concerned about what outcomes are realistic to expect, particularly in the area of basic skills attainment. Staff would prefer to see outcomes that measure progress—that is, enhancement rather than attainment.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

In-school Youth

Recruitment of in-school youth is the responsibility of the contracted service provider. In-school programs have the benefit of day-to-day access to students and access to student information to make preliminary determinations about eligibility. In some cases, the school district is the contracted service provider and therefore all recruitment is done by school staff in-house. In other cases, the service provider is an outside agency or organization. In these situations, the service provider works closely with the school's career counselors to identify eligible youth who could benefit from the program. The career counselors are also called upon in situations when a program is oversubscribed (particularly summer programs) to help identify which individuals on the waiting list would be the best candidates for the program. Other recruiting techniques include spreading information by word of mouth, passing out flyers, and giving out information at One-Stop centers and at state Regional Occupational Programs (ROP) centers that can serve 300-500 people per day. Students can also learn about available programs through the San Diego Workforce Development web site, which is widely available in the San Diego area.

Student databases are also used to identify possible program participants. In some cases, the schools have provided contractors with lists of students that can be used to identify in-school youth with low-income indicators who may be eligible for services. Students may also be targeted for being one or more grade levels behind or being involved with gang-related activity. Student lists are used by one contractor to recruit students for an in-school program before the school year begins. Youth who fit a certain profile (e.g., low-income, with barriers to employment or completing their education) are called on the phone before the start of the school year and invited in with their parents to complete a suitability screening. If the student appears to be committed to participating in and completing the program, a second meeting is scheduled to determine eligibility.

Out-of-school Youth

As with in-school youth, recruitment of out-of-school youth is the responsibility of the contracted service provider. For younger out-of-school youth (i.e., ages 14-16), many of the same techniques are used (e.g., word of mouth, flyers, information available at One-Stop and ROP centers), however, more aggressive tactics are often needed to locate and recruit older youth ages 17-21. These methods include going into shopping malls, "hanging out" in places frequented by youth, visiting the adult education centers or the local community college, placing ads in the local papers (e.g., Penny Saver), screening dropout lists from the public schools, and talking to military recruiters. Service providers also rely on referrals from other agencies in the area.

Recruitment of older out-of-school youth is reported to be a major challenge. For example, the Young Adult Employment Program, operated out of the East County Career Center, has so far enrolled only 6 youth from among some 30-35 who have been interviewed. The contractor (Grossmont Unified School District) reports that although some of its recruitment/outreach efforts have met with initial success, only a small percentage of applicants follow through and complete the interview and orientation process. By asking applicants to attend a few appointments early in the recruitment process, the contractor is able to identify those who are reliable and appear committed to completing the program, which is very important because the contract includes a 15 percent incentive bonus for meeting outcome goals. The contractor is cautious about enrolling youth who are unlikely to complete the program, since it "can't afford to have negative outcomes."

Recently, SDWP was contacted by Connections, a San Diego City Schools program (operated in conjunction with truancy abatement) to locate school dropouts and re-enroll them in school. Working collaboratively with Connections to provide these out-of-school youth with continuing services once they return to the school environment may prove to be an effective way of reaching what has been a very difficult population to serve.

Summer Programs

For both in-school and out-of-school youth, summer programs are easy to fill. In fact, there are often more applicants than jobs available. Generally, students know about summer positions from past experiences, flyers, or by word of mouth. Some programs have developed guidelines for admission into summer job programs by screening students on the basis of grades, disciplinary history and an interview.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

The SDWP uses a wide variety of assessment tools to help assess youth skills and needs and develop a detailed Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS includes a service strategy that identifies achievement objectives, appropriate employment goals, and appropriate supportive services for each participant. The ISS is used to document the ongoing progress of each youth participant. On a monthly basis, contractors are expected to meet with each youth enrolled in their program and update the ISS.

Responsibility for determining eligibility, conducting the initial assessment, and developing the ISS varies across programs. Out-of-school youth are referred to the San Diego Workforce Partnership Career Center Network (CCN) (i.e., the One-Stop centers) for eligibility determination, assessment, and ISS development. CCN staff then input the required data into the Job Training Automation (JTA) system. In special circumstances, contractors serving youth populations with special barriers to employment have the option of conducting and being paid for eligibility determination and data entry. Contractors operating programs for in-school youth are responsible for eligibility determination and data entry. They are also responsible for conducting career/objective assessments and developing an ISS for each youth enrolled in their program. As part of this process, the applicant's motivation and attitude toward work are evaluated to ensure that applicants who do not appear suitable for Workforce Partnership services are referred to more appropriate services and programs in the community. All client referrals must be documented. In some cases, contracted service providers may utilize the services of other organizations (e.g., the community college) to conduct the assessment process.

In all cases (i.e., in-school and out-of-school programs), youth are assessed in the following areas prior to enrollment into a contracted training program:

- Reading and math grade levels
- Interest and aptitudes
- Occupational/transferable skills
- Supportive service needs
- Work experience/history
- Financial resources
- Barriers to employment

The following assessments are routinely used to assist students with educational skills, interests, and aptitudes. Basic educational skills are tested using the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), the Adult Basic Learning Education (ABLE) and the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT). Career interests are evaluated using the Career Occupational Preference System (COPS) and the Self-Directed Search (SDS). Aptitude evaluation and assessment is done using the Self-Appraisal questionnaire, the Career Orientation Placement and Evaluation Survey (COPES) and the Career Ability Placement Survey (CAPS).

The Youth Employment Competency (YEC) System is also used to assess youth at entry into a program and again at the completion of a program. The YEC System is used for all participants and is based on employment competency statements recognized by the Private Industry Council. The YEC is based on three competency areas:

- Pre-Employment/Work Maturity
- Occupational/Job Specific Skills
- Basic Education Skills

Service provision guidelines have been developed for youth who are identified as deficient in any of the competency areas. For example, youth who are identified as deficient in 6 or more of the specified pre-employment/work maturity skills areas must receive at least 40 hours of Pre-Employment /Work Maturity Skills training. Six of the 40 hours, specifically in the areas of making career choices, using labor market information, preparing resumes, filling out applications, and interviewing, must be completed prior to participation in any work experience. The remaining 34 hours of training are then divided between Level I and Level II as appropriate for the program design.

Youth must be certified competent in at least 2 of the 3 areas to be considered a positive outcome for performance purposes. Upon exit from the program, youth demonstrating proficiency in 2 or more of the competency areas receive a Workforce Partnership Youth Employment Competency Skills Certificate. Contractors must document achievement of these competency areas through post-assessment conducted internally by provider's staff.

SERVICES PROVIDED

The SDWP has been in the business of providing career assistance to individuals for almost 25 years. According to program staff, SDWP has been implementing strong school-to-work programs for several years. For the past 2 years, SDWP has been working to redesign its programs to better align with the concepts of WIA and provide youth with year-round work-experience programs. While most of the structures are now in place to provide integrated services, many of the contracted service providers have not yet started or are just now beginning to implement the new guidelines. Therefore, the following discussion is based more on what will be in place when the new program guidelines are fully operational than on what has been offered in the past.

SDWP has served thousands of youth (both in-school and out-of-school) and adults, providing career skills training and summer programs. Under WIA, SDWP plans to provide services to all youth in San Diego County, a small proportion of whom will be WIA-eligible.

Overview of Integrated Service Delivery in Year-Round Programs

Under the new youth strategy, year-long internship programs will be offered to both in-school and out-of-school youth. The new year-long format emphasizes career exploration in a field of interest, academic performance, and work experience. Internship opportunities are a key component of all programs. The programs are designed to build the connection from what is learned in school to what is needed in the workplace, resulting in youth who are better prepared to succeed in the workplace and meet the needs of local employers.

Over a 12-month period, youth will participate in 3 graduated levels of work-based learning:

- Level I—Youth at risk of dropping out of school receive introductory pre-employment/work maturity skills training and are placed in subsidized or employer paid entry-level internship. Youth must complete 210 hours and be paid at least minimum wage in this first-level internship.

- Level II—Youth receive in-depth pre-employment/work maturity training and either classroom training or an internship, depending on individual need. This second-level internship includes a minimum of 120 hours designed to teach students more advanced skills in their career interest area. The internship may be employer-paid or subsidized at minimum wage or more.

- Level III—Thirty percent of the participants completing Level II must enter an employer-paid internship for the contractor to achieve the full performance-based payment. This third-level internship must incorporate graduated tasks and skills in the youth's career interest area. Youth must be employed a minimum of 20 hours per week, for at least 30 days, at an average wage of $6.25 per hour.

While some service providers may choose to start the program with a summer internship component, this is not always the case. Services are provided on a year-round basis and may or may not include a specific summer component.

It is anticipated that youth will participate in up to 3 internships throughout the year (one in each level of the program), which provide increasingly challenging activities and responsibilities. A hypothetical internship plan for a student interested in veterinary medicine is attached to demonstrate the 3-tiered system (Attachment 1). A series of technical assistance workshops were offered to employers and service providers to help them develop internship opportunities.

Contracted service providers are required to incorporate activities into their program design to address at least 4 of the following 6 school-to-career principles:

- Community awareness and parental involvement
- Staff training/Instructional methods
- Integration of basic education and occupational learning
- Portfolios
- Employer involvement
- Postsecondary connection

In addition, programs must provide youth with instruction on independent living skills and health education. Group activities that teach youth positive ways of having fun while building teamwork and leadership skills (e.g., field trips, recreational events, family/group outings) must also be offered.

Outcomes for youth enrolled in the program are primarily education-based:

- Youth ages 14-18 who do not have a GED or high school diploma must remain in school, or engage in postsecondary education or advanced training.
- In-school youth ages 18-21 with a diploma or GED will receive services to assist them with entry into community college or other certificate programs.
- For out-of-school youth without a GED or high school diploma, the emphasis will be on completion of secondary education and, ultimately, placement and retention in postsecondary education, advanced training, or employment.

While the integrated year-long program model became effective July 1999, many service providers are just beginning to operate under the new approach. Others are still in the planning phase. Program staff report that this year will be spent assisting contractors to adjust and adapt to a new way of delivering services. The following discussion provides an overview of the services delivered by 2 contracted providers who are currently making a transition to the integrated year-long model. Since service integration is not yet complete, the services described are those previously provided under JTPA. How these programs will be modified to meet the new 3-tiered approach is yet to be determined.

ACCESS

ACCESS is a non-profit community-based organization (CBO). ACCESS has operated education, employment and training programs in San Diego County for over 25 years. ACCESS is dedicated to promoting self-sufficiency and economic independence to the neediest and most vulnerable groups in the county. ACCESS provides services to special youth, including teen parents, youth in foster care, first- and second-generation immigrants, and institutionalized youth.

As one of the 3 CBOs that make up the San Diego Neighborhood Youth Collaborative, ACCESS is one of several contractors currently providing year-long programs to in-school and out-of-school youth. For this in-school program, ACCESS employment counselors work with the career counselors at the school to identify eligible youth who are at risk of dropping out. The program is run on an open-entry, open-exit system. When possible, the employment counselor tries to meet with the youth's parents and get their support, which often helps to keep the youth in the program. ACCESS is currently contracted to provide services to 14 in-school youth in an integrated year-round program.

Students enrolled in the in-school program meet with the employment counselor to develop an ISS based on their assessment results. Work readiness training is offered for 2 hours (from 3:00-5:00), 3 days a week (Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday). Wednesday afternoon is reserved for homework, while Friday is reserved for make-up work. Twenty hours of work readiness must be completed before a student is allowed to go on an internship. A total of 40 hours of work readiness skills are offered in the program, along with 80 hours of basic skills, 10 hours of computer literacy, 6-10 hours of health education, and independent living/life skills.

Students in this program must complete a minimum of 210 hours of work experience or "limited internship." If the youth are 16 or older and have worked before, the employment counselor looks for a direct placement in their career interest area. If the student is younger or has had no previous work experience, the employment counselor looks for a "limited internship," which provides the youth with a supervised, learning-rich environment (in the private or public sector) to gain skills and knowledge through graduated tasks. Although the program requires only 210 hours, the employer has the option of hiring the student beyond those hours.

Students participating in the in-school program reported that the portfolio they develop in the work readiness component is the most useful part of the program. Specifically, the youth felt that developing a resume and cover letter and learning how to complete a job application were particularly helpful. Both of the youth interviewed learned of the program through word of mouth.

A similar year-long program is offered by ACCESS for out-of-school youth ages 18-21. A variety of recruitment methods (e.g., flyers, ads in the local paper, referrals from other agencies, visits to the local laundromats) are used to locate youth for this program. An orientation session is offered at ACCESS at which applicants are expected to provide the documents needed to determine JTPA/WIA eligibility (e.g., birth certificate, Social Security card, proof of income). ACCESS staff use this session as an opportunity to pre-screen the applicants before sending them to the Career Center for formal eligibility determination. Youth who are eligible are assessed at the Career Center before returning to ACCESS for development of their ISS.

Youth participate in up to 40 hours of self-paced work readiness training. Computers are available on-site for students to access ERISS, a computerized database that describes every aspect of any occupation participants might want to investigate. (ERISS is developed and maintained by SDWP to reflect current employment conditions in the local area, as well statewide and nationally.)

Participants are referred out for basic skills and GED preparation, while information on postsecondary options is provided through guest speakers from area colleges and universities.

Out-of-school youth must participate in 210 hours of "limited internship" or work experience, with a minimum of 20 hours per week at an hourly wage of $5.75. The goal of the employment counselor is to develop internship opportunities that can lead to permanent jobs. During the program, the employment counselor visits the worksite every 2 weeks to pick up the attendance logs. In between visits, the counselor is in touch with the employer and the youth through frequent phone calls. When the internship is completed, followup calls are made to the employer and the youth at 30 days and 13 weeks. This program is expected to have 90 percent positive outcomes, defined as obtaining a full-time job, joining the military, enrolling in college, or becoming a trade apprentice.

A student interviewed who ,was participating in the year-long, out-of-school program was enthusiastic about her experience. She is a single parent who wanted to work regular hours (i.e., 9:00-5:00, Monday through Friday) in a professional environment. She spent her first 3 weeks in the program learning how to use the computer, receiving help in math and English, and getting information about careers and counseling about choices. She is now working in an internship with the Institute for Arts Education, 3 days a week for 4 hours each day, at $5.75 per hour. She is happy with her position, which will also allow her and her daughter access to artistic events. She described the ACCESS staff as encouraging in helping her to believe in herself and build her confidence. Before coming to ACCESS, this 21-year old woman worked in the fast food industry. Her daughter is 2 years old and is in a day care center located nearby.

Grossmont Union High School District

The Grossmont Union High School District is another contracted service provider serving in-school and out-of-school youth in year-long programs. Grossmont Union High School District is part of the East County Career Center Partnership. GUHSD has been providing innovative youth services since 1977. Formal and informal linkages between public and private agencies maximize diverse services for employment and training.

The El Cajon Valley High School Program is designed to serve 30 Title I/Chapter 1 youth. Most of the students in the program are sophomores and juniors, although there are a few seniors participating. Students are recruited in the summer from lists provided by the schools; 65 percent of the enrollees must be "at risk," as defined by behavior problems, gang affiliation, or poor grades or attendance. Youth are called on the phone before the beginning of the school year and invited to come in with their parents for suitability screening. This meeting also serves as an opportunity for program staff to determine whether the youth appears committed to completing the program. Eligibility determination is conducted during a separate meeting. Generally, parents have been pleased with the program and have been helpful with recruiting the students. Even so, program staff report that recruiting youth is difficult—with approximately 120 students eligible, program staff are having a hard time filling 30 program slots.

Eligible participants are assessed by Grossmont College staff who are sent to the high school to conduct a 4-hour test battery. In the past, students were then scheduled to meet individually with the career counselors to review their assessment results. This year, the counselor will review results in a group setting, which may trigger more discussion about the findings across students.

Students participate in a pre-employment/work maturity skills class, which meets each day for one class period for the entire school year. Previously, the class lasted only one semester. This year, students are also required to enroll in an occupational skills class as part of an ROP program. Approximately 3 weeks into the program, program staff begin developing internships. The internship occurs after school and is normally 10-15 hours per week for a total of 280 hours. Students are paid $5.75 per hour and receive school credit. As a result of programmatic changes consistent with school-to-career objectives, many of the current employers are new to the program. Employers were selected on the basis of location and meeting the criteria for mandated industry clusters. The program is marketed to local employers as an opportunity to give back to the community and train the workforce.

Students enter internships at different times. All students must develop portfolios and be interviewed by the employer. Prior to all placements, employers are required to sign a limited partnership agreement, which sets forth the expectations for the internship. Program staff visit the site at least once every 2 weeks, while an on-site supervisor provided by the employer provides daily oversight. Program staff evaluate student skills and performance half-way through the program and again at the end of the internship. Ideally, the employer will hire the youth for the summer following the internship program.

In addition to the work skills class and the internship experience, the program offers a leadership development component. As a group, the class participates in a ropes course (preferably at the beginning of the semester) to encourage teamwork. Students are provided with an educational tour of Sea World to expose them to the variety of jobs, and they visit Grossmont College to tour the campus and attend presentations on admissions and financial aid.

Grossmont Union High School District is also contracted to provide a year-long program for out-of-school youth. The Young Adult Employment Program is targeted at dropouts who are 18-21 years old. Though contracted to serve 12 youth, recruitment has been a major challenge. To date, over 30 applicants have been interviewed; only 6 have enrolled. Recruitment methods include referrals from CBOs and other agencies and programs (e.g., Welfare to Work, ROP), word of mouth, dropout lists provided by the schools, visits to the local Army/Navy recruiting center and local adult education centers, and program overviews provided twice daily at the East County Career Center. Applicants are scheduled for a series of appointments to complete the recruitment, eligibility, and ISS processes. These meetings allow program staff to identify those youth who appear committed to completing the program. Since the contract includes a 15 percent incentive bonus for meeting performance goals, program staff are particularly interested in enrolling youth who are likely to complete the program.

Participants in this program first enroll in a 30-hour Job Search program offered each week at the East County Career Center. The case manager works with each participant individually to complete the pre-employment/maturity skills competencies and develop a portfolio. Although not required, youth without a diploma are strongly encouraged to attend the GED class offered on-site at the Career Center. Youth are also encouraged to enroll in an open-entry ROP class if there is one that interests them. The internship component of this program includes 330 hours of work experience with graduated skills built in. Similar to the in-school program, youth must work for a minimum of 20 hours per week.

Overview of Integrated Service Delivery in Summer Programs

Two years ago, the focus of the Summer YouthForce program shifted from finding youth jobs to providing youth with a learning-rich work experience through paid internships in their area of interest. Employability skills training was also integrated throughout the summer program. Instead of receiving 20 hours of employability training up-front, youth now receive a 4-hour course on interviewing, resume writing, and other related skills up-front, with ongoing training offered throughout the summer.

The Workforce Partnership has historically operated a youth employment program for eligible youth ages 14-21 during the summer vacation months. A brief description of several summer internship programs offered in the past is shown as Attachment 2. The Summer YouthForce program was redesigned in the spring of 1999 to meet the majority of WIA requirements. The summer 2000 program will provide internships for youth who are not engaged in year-long in-school or out-of-school programs. SDWP plans to extend the contracts procured for the 1999 summer program and modify them to meet the remaining WIA requirements.

In summer 2000, 14- to 16-year-olds who are not job-ready and are at-risk of dropping out of school will participate in the federally subsidized portion of the program known as Summer YouthForce. Youth entering the program this summer will have skill attainment goals in one of three skill areas: basic skills, occupational skills, and work readiness skills. For the first time this year, this means that a youth entering the program through a summer intership experience may or may not exit the program upon returning to school in the fall. If the youth has met skill attainment goals, he/she will exit the program and begin followup activities. If he has not met skill attainment goals, he may continue with services through the end of the first school semester, or depending upon needs identified in the Individual Service Strategy, make a transition into a year-long program.

Youth will be recruited from the schools in the 9th and 10th grades and will engage in pre-employment/work-maturity skills training, basic skills training, career exploration, and learning-rich internships in their career area of interest. Approximately 20 hours of work readiness training is provided throughout the course of the summer. In addition, youth spend approximately 210 hours in a subsidized internship at $5.75 per hour. For the first time this year, all youth participating in this program will now receive followup services and participate in enhancement activities during the subsequent school year.

The types of followup services provided will be determined by the service provider and may include activities such as reflective exercises (e.g., a report written about their summer project), additional career assessments to see if career goals change as a result of the summer experience, visits to a career center, or a seminar on conflict resolution/mediation. It is the responsibility of the same contracted service provider to make the necessary arrangements with the school principal to ensure that students will be available to participate in the school-year activities. This may mean negotiating with the school to provide space and/or allow students to leave classes to participate in activities offered during school hours. The actual services to be provided and the arrangements that have been made to ensure that students will be able to participate will be detailed in the provider's application for funds and will be approved by SDWP before the summer program begins.

The integrated summer program is scheduled to begin in summer 2000. Program staff report that many of last summer's service providers will again apply for contracts. A brief overview of the services provided by one of these contractors is provided below. It is likely that the services provided in summer 2000 will be similar to those provided in the past—although this year, the program will be supplemented with followup activities during the school year. Providers will propose followup activities to the Partnership for approval. Examples of followup activities include: projects linking the summer experience to the classroom, tours and orientation to the On-Stop center, and conflict resolution workshops.

The San Diego Neighborhood Youth Council, the collaborative formed by ACCESS, Neighborhood House, and Occupational Training Services, is one of several contracted service providers for the Summer YouthForce program. ACCESS staff go to the schools to recruit youth for their summer program. In the past, students were enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis; however, school counselors now determine which students need the program most. An ACCESS case manager meets with the students one-on-one to conduct an assessment, including the COPS, CAPS, and COPES, and to develop an ISS. Employability skills training is offered at the beginning of the program and is followed by half-day sessions offered once a week throughout the summer for students to work on their portfolio. Based on their interests and abilities, students are matched to internships by the case manager. Students are paid $5.75 per hour for a total of 180-210 hours. The case manager conducts 2 monitoring visits to the internship site during the summer, interviewing the participant and the employer and observing the students in their work environment.

Role of Contractors/Program Staff in Integrated Program

SDWP relies on a broad variety of contractors, from CBOs to school districts, to provide services in all categories of youth programming. In fact, SDWP provides no direct services to clients; instead, SDWP staff monitor compliance with program standards and provide technical assistance. Because of new Federal guidelines and the implementation of a new youth plan, many of the contract service providers for 2000 and beyond are currently being selected and approved. In some cases, current contractors (e.g., Grossmont Union School District, the San Diego Neighborhood Youth Collaborative) will continue to provide services by adapting to the new goals and requirements of WIA. In other cases, new contractors will be brought on to provide integrated services under new program requirements.

Assessment of Service Integration

With the year-long internship program just getting underway and the integrated summer program not scheduled to begin until summer 2000, it is too early to assess the success of the newly introduced integrated models. Program staff recognize that it will take some time for current service providers to make the transition to the new program model. In fact, this year is designed to provide contractors with assistance in adapting their programs. Service providers are adjusting the program designs to address WIA components such as longer, more extensive services, comprehensive followup services and age-specific program designs.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

SDWP has worked hard to partner with other agencies and leverage resources to serve their "all kid agenda." Linkages with other programs and the utilization of a broad array of services across the San Diego area are some of the major strengths of the SDWP youth programs. Because the Workforce Partnership has been in business in the area for over 25 years, it has been able to build strong networks with existing public and private agencies. These linkages and partnerships will be a vital component to the success of the newly developed integrated internship programs.

The school systems have played a major role in youth programs in San Diego County. Several school districts, including Grossmont, Ramona, San Diego, Sweetwater, and Vista, serve as contracted service providers. SDWP staff also work closely with the school-to-career staff throughout the county on a regular basis.

SDWP has established strong ties to several job market intermediaries, including the Job Service, the local Chambers of Commerce, labor unions, employer associations, and non-profit foundations. SDWP has worked collaboratively with the local Job Service to offer job fairs. The Job Service also serves as a source of referrals for SDWP programs. Representatives from the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Greater San Diego Chamber of Commerce serve on the Youth Council. The AFL-CIO is also represented on the Youth Council, as well as on the Workforce Investment Board. Labor unions have been very involved in the STC activities offered in San Diego and will play a major role in the Youth Opportunity Area grant San Diego received last year. The Workforce Partnership has been actively involved with Job Corps, AmeriCorps, the San Diego Black Contractors' Association, and many other organizations that participate on the Youth Council. SDWP has also begun to work with local foundations through the Youth Opportunity Area grant; program staff hope to expand these foundation linkages to other youth programs in the future.

SDWP has established linkages with several other programs and agencies. SDWP has worked with the juvenile justice agency on 2 programs, including a summer program with the court schools. SDWP has also worked with area colleges and universities (e.g., the University of California at San Diego) to offer summer programs that expose youth to postsecondary educational opportunities and to conduct assessments (e.g., Grossmont College). Representatives from higher education also serve on the Youth Council, along with representatives from the public housing authority. As part of the Youth Opportunity Area grant, SDWP is also working with faith-based organizations (e.g., All Congregations Together, Jewish Community Center).

Many of these linkages have been developed over the years by SDWP in the process of providing jobs and job-related assistance to youth and young adults. Others are the result of recently developed relationships with contractors and employers as SDWP has sought to identify agencies that meet the requirements of their new plan. Much of the challenge for SDWP is to create opportunities for local contractors to establish linkages as part of their service delivery in ways that SDWP does naturally. The establishment of the 6 One-Stop centers, including one run by SDWP itself, should help to promote linkages, as they become resources for all youth-related year-round services.

SDWP administrators are always concerned about the breadth of diversity in San Diego County and the need to have a wide variety of service providers to fit the range of populations and geographical conditions under its jurisdiction. No one program or agency can possibly meet the needs of such a large and dispersed community. SDWP hopes to use the Youth Opportunity model to bring the various stakeholders together to develop innovative, collaborative ways to serve youth.

According to program staff, timelines and procedural red tape sometimes hinder the ability to form partnerships or program linkages. Conflicting regulations for various funding sources and concerns about territorial issues such as "Who is going to pay?" "Whose clients are they?" and "Whose power base will be affected?" can also be a problem. SDWP staff have found that if all the parties are able to put their own issues aside and focus on the needs of the youth, the rewards can be enormous.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

The responsibility for both developing jobs and doing post-program placement for youth programs under the aegis of SDWP is assigned to the individual contractors. One employment counselor who works with both in-school and out-of-school youth spoke of developing jobs whenever and wherever she could. This included using social contacts and information she received from friends and family, in addition to the traditional sources such as the Chamber of Commerce and calls to local businesses. The success that many contractors have had in identifying and maintaining the participation of employers who are willing to provide internships and summer jobs is attributed to the desire of the business community to help in the education and training of the workforce.

OUTCOMES

Data for the newly integrated youth programs are not yet available. However, program data for the 1998-1999 program year (i.e., July 1998 through June 1999) indicate that SDWP's JTPA Title IIC programs exceeded expectations in two areas: "entered employment rate" (with 48 percent of terminees entering employment) and "employability enhancement rate" (with 64 percent positive outcomes).

Program administrators have expressed a need for outcome data to reflect not only how participants do at the start or the end of a program but that also indicate progress made along the way (e.g., retention in school for youth at risk of dropping out). There has also been some concern raised about some of the outcome measures required by DOL, which appear too stringent. For example, some participants have chosen to work part-time jobs; however, these youth are listed as terminations because only full-time jobs satisfy the successful completion category.

Outcome expectations have been built into the newly approved contracts for integrated youth programs. Because programs must demonstrate a success rate of 90 percent, some programs are now wary of enrolling youth who have a low likelihood of completing the program. This may mean that youth who are most in need of services are overlooked as contractors focus on identifying youth who are likely to complete the program and contribute toward their performance goal.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

As an established agency with 25 years of experience in the workforce development area, SDWP had a number of thoughts to share with other programs developing integrated programs:

- Nothing can happen in isolation. The more programs can work together and share ideas and services, the more effectively those programs can serve youth. The Youth Opportunity movement provides a good example of bringing individuals, agencies, and organizations together to serve youth.

- Programs need to be flexible to meet the specific needs of the youth or young adults served. Services should be age-specific and need-specific, with an emphasis on school-to-career activities and education.

- Programs need to be comprehensive, with linkages to other services not covered by WIA.

- Mentoring is one of the most challenging services to provide. Instead of trying to find outside mentors for youth, ask youth whom they admire (e.g., family member, teacher, neighbor) and work with those individuals to serve as mentors.

- Programs need time to plan with employers and to clarify the difference between a job and an internship. The more specific information you can provide an employer up-front about expectations and responsibilities, the more likely they are to develop a learning-rich internship experience (rather than simply a job placement). Provide employers with specific examples of internship possibilities when possible.

- Truant officers are a good source of referrals.

- Consider offering stipends for basic education to keep the youth engaged and improve retention.

- Identify outcome measures that indicate progress along the way (e.g., retention in school), as well as those that assess attainment of a specified goal (e.g., high school diploma).

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NORTHWEST WASHINGTON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Summer 1999: 381 enrolled, most of whom were in school 17% of 1999 summer enrollees are enrolled in 1999-2000 year-round activities.

Fall 1999:

No. of in-school enrollees	**23**
No. of out-of-school enrollees	**66**
Total	**89**

Estimates for 2000 when fully operational:

No. of in-school enrollees	**175**
No. of out-of-school enrollees	**100**
Total	**275**

About 200 youth are expected to be enrolled in summer 2000 activities. All of them will be assessed regarding need for 2000-2001 year-round activities.

Characteristics of in-school enrollees (fall 1999):

Gender:	
Male	**43%**
Female	**57%**
Race:	
White	**48%**
Hispanic	**35%**
Asian or Pacific Islander	**13%**
African-American	**4%**
Age:	
14-15	**13%**
16-17	**61%**
18 or older	**26%**

26% receiving public assistance of some kind, primarily food stamps.

Characteristics of out-of-school enrollees:

Gender:	
Male	**35%**
Female	**65%**
Race:	
White	**67%**
Hispanic	**23%**
American Indian or Alaskan Native	**8%**
African-American	**2%**
Age:	
14-15	**1%**
16-17	**29%**
18 or older	**70%**

INTRODUCTION

The Northwest Washington Workforce Development Council (WDC) is centered in Bellingham and, through its main office there and 3 other offices, serves Whatcom County (Bellingham), Skagit County, Island County, and San Juan County and their 18 school districts. Across the counties, some 400 WIA-eligible youth are enrolled in either summer or year-round employment/educational activities over the course of a year.

This program has integrated summer and school-year services into a year-round strategy for a number of years. The focus of this strategy has been provision of personal attention to each individual, as appropriate over the summer(s) and year-round. This has been accomplished through an ongoing relationship between an individual youth and his/her coordinator. Twenty-four coordinators are employed by the WDC and are located in the WDC's One-Stop centers.

For a youth who is in school, the coordinator knows the youth's school guidance counselor and perhaps one or two of his/her teachers. The coordinator is known in the high school. For a youth who was out of school on entering the program, the coordinator is likely to know the person who referred the youth if recruitment was done by a referral. In any case, the coordinator gets to know the youth's personal situation and communicates with whomever is close to the youth, as appropriate, in developing a mix and sequence of services. If the coordinator helps the youth to enroll in an educational program or work experience, he/she communicates with those providers frequently. The coordinator coordinates with public and private sector employers in his/her geographic area, has access to a wide range of support services, and is aware of the offerings of colleges in the area. For both in-school and out-of school youth, the coordinator draws on a wide menu of services, opportunities, and contacts. A number of special programs are among the possible services. Three such

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Education:

High school dropouts	**52%**
High school graduate or GED, no college	**45%**
High school graduate or GED, some college	**3%**

Out of the labor force prior to enrollment, not seeking employment	**55%**
Unemployed	**24%**
Employed part-time	**21%**
Employed full-time	**0%**

50% were receiving public assistance of some kind, primarily food stamps/TANF

Completion and positive outcome rates:

89% of in-school youth complete their programs and achieve positive outcomes*
92% of out-of-school youth complete their programs and achieve positive outcomes

***Documented skills or competencies attained that enhance their employability; or course or credit completion; or diploma/GED; or placement and retention in a job, internship, or career; or enrollment in postsecondary education.**

programs are described in this report. They illustrate the necessary steps taken to build the partnerships that sponsor these programs.

The coordinator works with the youth to arrange for a sequence of educational, employment, and training experiences that meet the youth's needs as he/she grows and matures. In keeping with the WDC's central goal that the youth stay in school, graduate, and attain the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)-based competencies, each coordinator carries out this mission in serving the 10-20 individuals who make up the youth portion of his/her caseload of youth and adults. This approach has characterized the program and will continue to be its mainstay under WIA.

To date, most in-school participants in the program have been considered to need primarily summer services—work experience that may be combined with summer school if a youth needs academic remediation or to make up credits. In 1994, the WDC developed guidelines to help coordinators determine whether a summer participant (funded under Title IIB of JTPA) would receive continuing services (funded under Title IIC). In any case, all summer youth do receive followup services for up to 12 months, based on need and as identified in the individual's Workforce Skills Training Plan. Coordinators continue to consult the guidelines, which are being re-examined as the program makes the transition to WIA.

Ongoing individual assessment by the coordinator, in consultation with the school teacher or counselor and with other WDC staff, may indicate that—in light of a youth's other responsibilities and activities and based on most in need and most able to benefit—the youth may not need competency-based training or part-time work experience during the coming school year. For some youth, it is recommended that they receive certain services after the summer—for example, perhaps one more course to be made up after school in order to graduate with his/her class. For most in-school youth, summer is considered to be the backbone of the overall program, a time when most of the youth do need a summer job, would benefit from gaining the SCANS competencies that summer employers impart, and perhaps make up credits during summer school in the mornings as needed.

Three hundred eighty-one youth were enrolled in the summer 1999 program, most of whom were in-school youth enrolled in high school during the year. Eighty-nine youth were participating in year-round activities as of fall 1999, and the majority of these youth were out of school when they joined the program. Many of them had been enrolled in the summer 1999 program and are continuing to participate in year-round activities. Approximately 200 youth are expected to be enrolled in the 2000 summer program, all of whom will have been assessed to determine their need for year-round services following the summer. Almost 90 percent of the youth in the Northwest Washington WDC program are 16 or older.

There are ample employment opportunities in northwest Washington for those who complete the program and graduate from high school. Jobs in low-end retail without benefits are plentiful for those who have just a high school diploma. For those with community college training, there is a strong outlook for computer-related employment. Companies that focus on providing customer service via 1-800 numbers are hiring people with some postsecondary education and technical and communication

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skills. Voicestream, one such company, has an entry wage of over $8 per hour. These companies offer fringe benefits. The construction trades have openings for individuals with high school diplomas who can enter apprenticeship training. WDC staff believe they haven't prepared enough youth for this field, and plan to do so.

All services of the Northwest Washington WDC are provided in-house rather than by contractors, reflecting a philosophy that the organization should know the individual and have direct responsibility for providing services to the extent possible. The WDC partners with the public schools and 2-year postsecondary institutions, which contribute training services such as basic skills training and classroom vocational training.

Each local WDC office is a One-Stop center, where adults and youth (whether WIA-eligible or not) can seek jobs; learn computer skills; develop employability skills; prepare resumes; determine their eligibility for publicly funded programs; enroll in welfare-to-work programs, youth employment, and training programs, the Job Corps, or Employment Service activities such as Job Clubs; receive dislocated worker and older worker services; get help with support services such as child care, health services, and transportation; and obtain individual guidance toward school completion and postsecondary education. The Bellingham center, called WorkSource, houses staff from the Employment Service, the Job Corps, the Department of Health and Human Services (welfare/TANF), and the Opportunity Council (the Community Action Agency). Around the corner from WorkSource is Northwest Youth Services, which provides service to youth in foster care or in drug treatment, including homeless and runaway youth. The 4 One-Stop centers are staffed by 24 full-time Coordinators who provide guidance as caseworkers to youth and adults, drawing upon all of the above services the year round.

The WDC has implemented a system-wide competency-based training system based on the principles of SCANS. To validate the SCANS skills among the northwest Washington population, WorkSource of Bellingham worked with WorkNet—a consortium of workforce preparation agencies in the Bellingham area that includes Bellingham Technical College, the Bellingham Job Service, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Job Corps and the Department of Social and Health Services. Specifically, working with this group and with local employers, the WDC completed a Workforce Skill Standards (WSS) survey and focus group report. The process validated the use of SCANS to identify training outcomes pertinent to successful placement and retention of workers in this area of the state. The standards have further been adopted by the Skagit and Island Counties consortium of regional agencies, known as the Cascade Employment and Training Connection, of which the WDC is a member.

The coordinators ensure that the WDC's fundamental emphasis on SCANS-based Workforce Skill Standards is reflected in every activity with youth, employers, immediate supervisors, and school faculty and staff. The skill standards, as adopted by the WDC, are listed in Attachment 1. The standards are used in assessing youth, in designing the curricula that prepare youth for employment, in advising employers concerning skills to be mastered on the job, and in the written evaluations of youth employees. They appear in the intern (i.e., youth employee) and supervisor manuals and on all training, assessment, and evaluation forms. In using SCANS-based skills standards, the WDC is consistent with the state's own goals for school reform, which include teaching workforce competencies and career readiness to all students in the state, with SCANS as its foundation. This common foundation facilitates collaboration.

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH STRATEGY

This SDA has had a philosophy of serving youth in an integrated summer/year-round strategy for years, with the central focus being an ongoing relationship between the coordinator and the youth. The WDC developed guidelines in 1994 to help coordinators decide whether a summer participant (funded under Title IIB) would receive continuing services (funded under Title IIC) (Attachment 2). For selecting out-of-school youth to continue participating beyond summer, the guidelines called on coordinators to recommend youth who are "making progress but have not yet achieved work maturity or educational goals" and are considered able to achieve a "positive program outcome through continued participation." Guidelines for selecting in-school youth to continue receiving services beyond summer advised coordinators to recommend youth who were identified to be "at risk" (by the coordinator, in consultation with school staff and/or the employer as well as with the youth and his/her family) and who had participated in an academic component during the summer.

All youth enrolled in summer 2000 will have been assessed for likelihood of need for year-round services following the summer. Depending on the coordinator's assessment, a youth will be recommended for some level of service. Under the WDC's comprehensive youth strategy—in the past, currently, and in the future—when a summer participant receives year-round services, these services will be a combination of the following:

- The coordinator periodically contacting youth whose needs are considered to have been met, in the form of 12-month followup communication, and assistance if needed;
- The coordinator maintaining contact with school guidance counselors and with the youth to ensure that they stay in school and continue to earn credit toward graduation;
- The coordinator helping youth secure a part-time job after school, either in a subsidized or unsubsidized placement;
- The coordinator helping to arrange for tutoring, for sessions at a Learning Center to earn credits, or for strengthening the content of a youth's portfolio so that the student may earn credit with it;
- The coordinator helping the youth obtain support services if needed (such as health care, child care, and transportation).

Under WIA, the WDC anticipates working with a single funding amount totaling less than the previous combined funding amounts for youth under JTPA. It faces dual challenges of increasing the proportion of out-of-school youth served (as defined under WIA) and operating under a smaller total youth budget.

The organization plans to continue its integrated service delivery philosophy. The staff continue to believe that there may always be a large summer component—the ability to provide services on a full-time basis allows more time for intensive work experience, the chance to concentrate on mastering competencies, and a block of uninterrupted time to make up academic credits.

The WDC does foresee somewhat of a change in the emphasis among services, given a smaller youth budget with which to work. Staff indicated that they will redouble efforts to see that students earn their academic credits during the school year, thus decreasing the amounts the WDC pays for summer school tuition to make up these credits. The WDC will need to find additional ways to locate and recruit youth who are truly out of school. WDC staff will continue to network with members of the community who have seen these youth, such as foster parents and staff of health care clinics. They will work more closely with the school counselors to identify economically disadvantaged youth who have been listed as dropouts. Importantly, they will try to reach these individuals before they've formally dropped out—that is, when they are still enrolled in school but have been chronically absent.

The WDC estimates that it may be serving fewer youth overall, given WIA's requirement that individual youth be served on a year-round basis and the reduction in funding for youth. The WDC is working to make the One-Stop centers youth-friendly, with services that are geared to appropriate basic and work readiness skill levels. Regarding the 10 WIA-required program elements, the WDC is focusing on expanding opportunities for leadership and mentoring. Youth who work in the Best SELF and the Deception Pass projects (described below) do have true leadership opportunities, but the WDC seeks more opportunities that bring leadership to the forefront. The WDC has recently contacted agencies such as the Urban League to obtain leadership curricula and ideas.

Other funding streams are under consideration to augment the overall amount available to youth. Older youth may be served with adult-oriented WIA funds, for example, to pay for certain training under Individual Training Accounts. A September 1999 article, *TANF Funds: A New Resource for Youth Programs* (Attachment 3), provided an impetus for the WDC staff to consider how TANF funds may be accessed.*

PROCESS OF PLANNING YOUTH STRATEGY

The Youth Council members have recently been appointed, and the Council will begin meeting in spring 2000. Members include a school district superintendent, a head of a district's vocational education program, School-to-Work Board and Steering Committee members, a Job Corps center executive director, and an ex officio member of the WDC, among others. An initial function for the Council will be to review the WDC's overall plan and youth plan being submitted to the state.

All WDC staff meet in work teams together to exchange ideas and leads and plan projects together. During the transition from JTPA to WIA, the WDC has formed 4 self-directed teams made up of internal staff: Youth Services, Customer Flow/Performance (in a One-Stop system), Individual Training Accounts, and Business Services. The teams work on issues at hand and share notes, information, and recommendations. Each team meeting produces minutes, which are shared immediately among of all staff. In this way, everyone knows the progress and action items of all the teams. Anyone can make suggestions to any of the teams. Directors of the One-Stops as well as the overall executive director of the WDC can approve recommended actions quickly, without waiting for the next bimonthly meeting of the WDC.

Members of the Youth Services team, headed by the Youth Services Coordinator at WorkSource in Bellingham, include coordinators and others involved with youth from the other area offices of the WDC. Their work includes:

- A written analysis of current gaps in delivering the services listed among the 10 program elements of WIA, and how they may be filled;
- Examining memoranda of understanding with local school districts and identifying areas that call for revisions;
- Strengthening recruitment of out-of-school youth under the new definition;
- Marketing youth services under WIA;

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* A detailed guide, dated January 2000 is *Tapping TANF for Youth: When and How Welfare Funds Can Support Youth Development, Education, and Employment Initiatives*, Center for Law and Social Policy, Washington, DC. http://www.clasp.org/pubs/jobseducation

- Identifying, measuring, and reporting performance outcomes for youth; and

- Serving more youth in the One-Stop centers.

This team works with the WDC staff to develop the youth components of the state and Federal strategic plans due March 15, 2000. The team also assists the coordinators in designing and developing specific services for the youth programs under the WIA.

Though the Northwest Washington WDC does not contract out for services other than for vocational and basic skills training, the deputy director did offer a few suggestions for those SDAs that do contract out for services, in the interest of an effective integration of summer and year-round services. One suggestion is that SDAs have the same contractor provide both summer and year-round services, rather than have separate contracts for both programs. A related suggestion is to expand the timeframe of contracts, thus encouraging contractors to plan, strategize, and think in a more integrated fashion.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

This section discusses recruitment and selection for youth who are in school, youth who are out of school, and youth who have been identified as having specific needs in order to ensure that they stay in school and graduate. The coordinators are responsible for recruitment and use their contacts in the schools and youth-serving agencies to identify and communicate with potential participants.

Youth who are in school are recruited using flyers in the high schools and alternative schools and notices in school and local papers. Notices provide the WDC office phone number to contact. Youth calling that number will be connected to the coordinator responsible for his/her high school or alternative school. Recruitment also takes place through the school guidance counselor informing the designated coordinator about youth who need and might be eligible for services. Such leads might be conveyed over the phone or in person during the coordinator's routine visit to the school. If a counselor knows students who are chronically absent and might drop out, the counselor might call the coordinator. During the spring, many students learn about the summer program through heavy recruitment activities as well as word of mouth and prior experience.

Reaching youth who have dropped out of high school might follow the personal-contact pattern described above: the school counselor might inform the coordinator that a student has dropped out or has recently had excessive absences. Under a memorandum of understanding between the WDC and each school district, the WDC can reach potential WIA-eligible youth by examining dropout lists and free lunch lists (Attachment 4).

School-based recruitment does not necessarily work well in all schools. For example, one school district serves a particularly transient Navy community, and the counselors don't know their students well; further, their caseloads are unusually large. There is also no free/reduced price lunch program in place, which would have helped identify economically disadvantaged youth.

Some youth are in particular need of continuing services over several months or more in order to keep up with their courses, stay in school, and graduate. Certain programs have been developed that play an important role in meeting these needs. Recruitment for such programs is targeted. For example, a number of students were deficient in English and science. To meet those needs, a special summer project was designed at Deception Pass State Park, to provide a tailored English/science curriculum combined with restoration work at the park. Youth selected for this program would be able to make up their English and science credits; they also had to be willing to spend full days learning and working at this distant location (with van transportation between their high schools and the park).

Given the need to reach out-of-school youth, the WDC is forging relationships with organizations in the community other than the schools—for example, communicating regularly with Northwest Youth Services and with the health department and clinics to reach pregnant teens. One coordinator, based in the Skagit office, goes to a detention center monthly and makes a presentation. She talks with interested, eligible out-of-school youth individually, at the center, and recruits those who are interested.

PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENT/DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY

The coordinators are responsible for assessment, an ongoing process, and orientation. Based on the coordinator's sense of readiness on the part of a youth as well as logistics, an initial meeting is arranged between the coordinator and the youth. This meeting could take place at a school or in the coordinator's office. Depending on the circumstances, a coordinator might want to go to the school or wherever the youth is, if it seems that the youth is particularly at risk of not following through. Or, a coordinator might ask the youth to come to the coordinator's office, either because is it mutually convenient or because the coordinator wants the youth to put forth the effort to come to a place of business at a scheduled date and time. If the youth seems ready and willing, the first encounter may be a small-group orientation for new clients at the WDC office, followed by the initial one-on-one meeting with the coordinator.

The first meeting between the coordinator and the youth takes place as an informal discussion with minimal application/eligibility paperwork involved—reflecting the priority the WDC places on developing an individual relationship with each youth. There is a guide for the coordinator to use in observing and talking with a new potential participant (Attachment 5). The coordinator and youth talk about the youth's school life, employment experiences, home circumstances, and needs.

Following the meeting, the coordinator begins to shape an individual plan for the youth. The first or second meeting begins the comprehensive assessment, including a youth self-assessment questionnaire (Attachment 6), or an assessment of the youth's learning styles (using the TRG Learning-Style Inventory) and career interests (using the SDS Self-Directed Search, "You and Your Career"). Depending on the coordinator's perception of the youth's experience, work maturity, and needs, a youth might fill out a Workforce Skill Standards Transferable Skills Workbook, developed by the WDC, to assess the youth's familiarity with the skills required for successful employment. This workbook reflects the SCANS skills (Attachment 1).

A followup meeting entails completing eligibility forms and discussing the assessments. If several youth are at this juncture at about the same time, a small-group orientation to the variety of youth employment and educational services available will be scheduled. In the spring, group orientations (about 15-20 youth at a time) are scheduled in preparation for summer enrollment. This orientation consists of a daylong workshop conveying important pre-employment skills to prepare the youth for working with employers and supervisors.

When assessments and orientation have been completed, a Workforce Skills Training Plan is prepared. Each coordinator has considerable autonomy in tailoring the youth's year-round services. The length, amount, and type of training the WDC gives a youth before he/she starts a work experience varies according to an individual's needs, academic/employment plans, the worksite (employers may provide their own orientation), and by county. During the school year, a youth's program may entail taking courses to make up academic credits, reinforcing basic skills, or working to achieve employability competencies. This work can be done in a Learning Center using computer programs, supervised by the

Learning Center staff (described below). An individual plan might call for part-time work experience after school. For an out-of-school youth, the plan might start with a full-time academic-plus-work experience program that includes child care, such as the GRADS program for new mothers with infants. During this initial period, the coordinator and youth begin to set up the youth's portfolio. All youth in the SDA develop a portfolio. The portfolio assists the youth in identifying, documenting, articulating, and presenting their skills. For in-school youth, it can serve as documentation for subject-specific academic credit.

During the school year, most new cases involve out-of-school youth. During the late spring, however, with the larger summer programs about to begin, an influx of in-school youth enroll in the program and go through the steps outlined above. The WDC staff believe that a sizable, healthy summer program continues to be the mainstay of the overall youth employment and training program. Until now, the majority of in-school youth have received summer-only services with followup services during the academic year. A challenge under WIA will be to find ways to continue active services to in-school youth after the summer program—beginning with an assessment of what, if any, school-year services a summer participant might need after the summer. The guidelines developed in 1994 are now being re-examined in light of the requirements of WIA.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Overview of Integrated Service Delivery

Provision of sequenced, graduated summer and year-round services centers on the role of the coordinator (a full-time, year-round position). The coordinators are generalists who know and can draw on the range of summer and year-round programs, services, and partner agencies and organizations. Each coordinator is responsible for 20 to 30 individuals—youth and adults—whom he/she assists year-round and in the summer as long as the individual keeps in touch, is judged to need continuing services of some kind, and can benefit from continued support. A coordinator might serve youth in 2, 3, or more schools. Coordinators visit their schools regularly—usually weekly—to see their current youth clientele, or to see youth newly referred by a high school counselor. Coordinators maintain a close relationship with the guidance counselors at the high schools and with advisors or faculty at the technical/community colleges to which they are assigned. They visit employers to collect timesheets, check on youths' experiences on the job, and address problems.

Coordinators serve on Tech Prep (vocational education) advisory committees, school advisory councils, and other groups in the community. This keeps them in touch with a wide range of partnership possibilities and sources of in-kind contributions and a wide range of services an individual might need. Through these relationships, ideas for collaborative programs are generated that creatively combine learning and work.

Each coordinator uses a case management approach to serving individuals over time, centered on a Workforce Skills Training Plan. In turn, the coordinator asks each youth to keep a personal portfolio containing copies of relevant forms; examples of good work; tests; essays; evaluations; evidence of meeting Workforce Skill Standards; evidence of achieving competencies; and pictures, narratives, and anecdotes documenting achievements.

Coordinators emphasize the importance of making up school credits and graduating as well as preparing for employment opportunities. The WDC pays summer school tuition for WIA-eligible youth who need to make up credits during the summer, pays for GED preparation/exam for those who need such support, and provides scholarships for needy WIA-eligible youth to enroll in community college programs.

In preparing each youth's Workforce Skills Training Plan, coordinators draw primarily upon the WDC's core services. The Northwest Washington WDC's core services consist of academic support and work experience, and these are accessible to both in-school and out-of-school youth at all times of the year. In addition, the WDC has created special programs that integrate learning and work and which help to meet the longer term needs of youth from specific target groups. Core services and these special programs are discussed in turn.

Core Services

Academic support. The WDC devotes much effort to ensuring that the youth complete their courses, make up courses failed or not completed, and graduate high school with a diploma or a GED. Courses and credits (academic or various vocational courses) can be made up at a Learning Center. Learning Centers are located at most of the high schools, alternative schools, and community or technical colleges. Centers are usually open during school hours and after school. Summer schedules are common. The impetus for establishing Learning Centers came from the WDC (or Private Industry Council, as it was formerly known) in the early 1980s, when the superintendent of the Anacortes School District, serving as a policy advisor to the Private Industry Council, reported seeing a demonstration of a competency-based curriculum via computer. The Private Industry Council worked with the schools to set up Learning Centers where computer-based courses would enable students to make up credits by taking academic courses and attain competencies by taking a competency-based curriculum geared to preparation for the workplace. A competency-based curriculum used both at the Learning Centers and at the One-Stop centers is *Choices-CT*. Learning Centers are affiliated with the public school systems; if an out-of-school youth enrolls in a Learning Center, the school district counts that in its Average Daily Attendance (ADA). (In a neighboring SDA, the school district gives the WDC ADA funds, and the WDC operates the Learning Centers.)

In addition to the Learning Centers, the coordinators encourage individuals to enroll in regular summer school to make up academic courses. Summer school, operating in the mornings, is tuition-funded and costs $180 per half-credit or $360 per full credit. The WDC pays the tuition for WIA-eligible youth. The youth themselves are not paid for attendance, but if they complete a course, they receive a $50 incentive payment for every half credit earned. If course completion enables them to graduate, the incentive payment is $100. As a result of this emphasis on completing credits and graduating, WIA-eligible youth served by the Northwest Washington WDC experience a low dropout rate of 8-12 percent.

The WDC also offers scholarships for eligible youth who have completed a rigorous application process to enroll in career programs at a technical or community college. Overall, a small number of youth pursue postsecondary education, maintain their relationship with their WDC coordinator, and receive this substantial support. At the Bellingham location, if a youth decides to attend Bellingham Technical College, the youth switches to another coordinator who has strong links to the college's staff and faculty. This coordinator meets individually with the student as the student prepares a scholarship application package for the WDC. The package requires the youth to think through and make provision for child care, transportation, and living arrangements that will enable the youth to successfully pursue a postsecondary program. For example, apartment rental, child care arrangements, even car insurance payments must be documented in the scholarship package. An approved application results in WDC paying the tuition.

The profile below illustrates Northwest Washington's provision of academic support to an older youth beginning during summer 1998 and continuing, year-round, over a 2-year period.

> In summer 1998, a teenage mother (now 20) received her GED from Bellingham Technical College. Her baby was one year old at that time. College staff told her about the WDC and said that the WDC could provide funds for further postsecondary education. They gave her the phone number, and in November 1998 she called the WDC. She went to the WDC (to WorkSource, the One-Stop center in Bellingham) for an initial conference, took part in an orientation with about 20 others, and was assigned to a coordinator. He advised her, and it appeared that dental assisting would be a good program for her given its convenient days, hours, and potential pay. She filled out "a whole (scholarship application) package, all about my *life*. This was because they'd be putting money in, and they want the child care arrangements to work too; they even wanted to know how I'd pay my car insurance." As part of the application process, the WDC required her to interview at a dental office and talk with a dental assistant. A series of 14 dental assistant courses over a year and a half would cost $500-$800 per course. She passed the requirements for a WDC scholarship. With the assistance of the WDC, a Pell grant was also obtained. She began the certificate program in March 1999 and is proceeding through it. "Before I finish I'll go to the WDC" for job leads from her coordinator, combined with leads from the dental assistant program itself. She stated that she has valued the WDC tremendously. "Dan (the coordinator) has been wonderful. It's been a hard year. Dan offered to drive me if my car breaks down." Before completing the dental assistant program, the WDC will assist her with writing a resume and seeking a job. Followup services, including job retention efforts, will be available for this youth for at least 12 months.

Work experience. Most work experience is provided in the form of summer jobs (called internships) with public and nonprofit agencies and organizations—examples include the Bellingham Child Care Center, Western Washington University, parks and recreation programs, the Red Cross, a Goodwill store, the libraries, and summer tourist attractions around the Cascades or the San Juan Islands. Youth with previous subsidized work experience often seek out their own summer jobs in the private sector, with staff encouragement and assistance. Each coordinator develops jobs or keeps in touch with public and private employers in his/her vicinity. A typical summer experience might involve a youth doing credit catch-up (at summer school or at a Learning Center) in the morning, with a paid work experience in the afternoon. Three daylong workshops are given to summer youth participants—one in late spring to ensure that they are job-ready and 2 during the summer on special topics and issues that people encounter in the world of work. Youth are paid the minimum wage for workshop attendance, as they are for subsidized jobs. If they complete a summer course for academic credit, they earn a $50 incentive payment; if they actually graduate, they receive $100. During the school year, a youth might work at an after-school job which may be subsidized or unsubsidized; and, depending on the youth's circumstances, the coordinator may help match the youth with a job. A youth might also make up a course at a Learning Center, depending on the coordinator's guidance and the youth's needs and preferences. During the year, out-of-school youth may combine academics and work.

Working toward mastery of the SCANS-based Workforce Skill Standards is reflected in all school-year and summer work placements and is particularly prominent in the summer program. All 3 workshops emphasize the competencies and skills listed in Attachment 1. Employers complete Job Descriptions for each type of job, using the language of the Workforce Skill Standards to describe the requirements of the job. The youth's progress reports (completed by the immediate supervisor once in the middle of the summer and once again toward the end) indicate the youth's progress in mastering these skills (see the Trainee Progress Report, Attachment 7). Progress reports are reviewed in person with the youth employee. Both the Intern Manual and the Supervisor Manual stress the importance of learning these skills. Even letters of recommendation (per a written guide provided by the WDC to supervisors) incorporate the terms and concepts in describing what the youth has accomplished.

The Northwest Washington WDC makes prominent use of portfolios. Whether they are in-school or out-of-school, the youth are asked to keep a portfolio of their work, and most of them do. Attachment 8, from the Intern Manual, explains the uses of a portfolio. WDC staff are aware of the school districts' differing criteria for accepting (or not accepting) a portfolio for academic credit. A detailed portfolio containing narratives of a work experience, evidence of completing closely related coursework, and reviews of books read that are relevant may result in the granting of academic credit. A portfolio that highlights a work experience and its relation to the Workforce Skill Standards in detail might qualify for fulfilling a high school student's diversified occupation/career preparation requirement. Eligibility for credit depends on the content of the summer experience and the nature of any agreement between the WDC and the school district. A large majority of portfolios created have earned academic credit.

To underscore the importance the WDC attaches to ongoing personal contact, the coordinators visit the worksites at least every 2 weeks to pick up the youths' timesheets (Attachment 9). While there, the coordinators talk with the worksite supervisors and youth about experiences on the job and any related questions, issues, or problems.

The Bellingham Child Care Center illustrates how a worksite can serve WIA-eligible youth and adults all year round. Affordability and quality are the hallmarks of this community institution. Most funding comes from parent fees, the United Way, and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). DHHS can pay most but not all of a TANF recipient's child care fees. Forty percent of the children are full-fee; 40 percent are partly or fully subsidized. The center is headed by a team of 2 women who have been there for about 6 years. The center and the WDC have developed a long-standing relationship. WIA-eligible adults interested in working in the child care field can receive on-the-job training (OJT), and WIA-eligible youth can serve as interns, getting work experience with wages paid by the WDC.

Openings can become available at any time of the year and for various lengths of time. If the coordinator has a youth who could benefit from a part-time or full-time temporary work experience in child care, depending on the center's circumstances and flexibility, an immediate opening could be developed. Whether an opening exists for child care aide or office aide, the head of the center writes job descriptions expressed in SCANS/Workforce Standard Skills language. Progress is noted on the Training Progress Reports, and at the end of the work experience, a letter of recommendation is written. Copies of all these documents and the worker's own narratives, pictures, and lesson plans are kept in the portfolio.

One in-school youth first came to the center in summer 1998 for a JTPA summer job, then worked part-time during the school year, enrolled for a second summer, and now as a senior helps out as a volunteer when she can spare an hour or 2 in the afternoon. In summer 2000, she plans to work at the center again, this time possibly on the center's payroll. Her portfolio is filled with child observations, descriptions and samples of projects, anecdotes, pictures of children, copies of her progress reports, and her resume.

Special Programs

The Northwest Washington WDC collaborates with other agencies and organizations to provide an array of project-based learning opportunities for in-school youth and out-of-school youth who have particular needs or circumstances. Project-based learning provides integrated work-based learning experience to WIA-eligible youth. These opportunities are among the menu of possible services a coordinator may draw upon in developing a progressive sequence of services for each youth. All of the dozen or so unique programs arose from a collaboration between the WDC and other community organizations. The WDC believes that each program has its own potential to provide a link in a youth's long-term integrated plan.

Below is a sampling of such programs. GRADS fills an important role during the school year for in-school or out-of-school teen mothers. The Deception Pass State Park project is a summer program for in-school youth who need to make up English and science credits and want to work as a crew to renovate the park. This program, too, fills certain youths' needs at a particular juncture. The program also provides an illustration of creative collaboration and the steps that individuals can take to form a collaboration. The Best SELF program has been a summer-only program in which the youth (in-school or out-of-school) serve as paid classroom aides, eventually designing and teaching lessons. A 3-year grant will expand it to operate during the school year, as an after-school tutoring/enrichment program. This will create opportunities for youth to work part-time after school in Best SELF.

GRADS

GRADS (Graduation Reality and Dual-Role Skills) is an in-school program for pregnant teens and parents under 21 who live in Whatcom County. The program is based in the Bellingham Public Schools, within Options High School, an alternative school enrolling about 50 students. Operating for the past 9 years, the program is funded by the school district. The GRADS program director also heads Options High school and is head of Career and Technology Education for the Bellingham Schools. She is a collaborator with the WDC and has attended WDC planning sessions. WDC has been involved with GRADS and Options High School for 9 years. GRADS had 18 participants (3 of whom were WIA-eligible) and 12 babies (all about one year old or younger) as of fall 1999. The program's goals are that participants stay in school through graduation, have a healthy pregnancy, learn parenting skills, learn early child development, learn to balance work and family, and avoid additional pregnancies. Participants are required to earn their high school diploma or GED before they can get a job.

GRADS participants, and their babies if they have given birth, come every weekday to a separate facility from the alternative high school, which contains a day care center and classroom space. From 9:00 to 11:30 am, the participants take parenting/child development, from a GRADS teacher, for credit. The afternoon is devoted to English, math, history, or GED preparation, under the supervision of another teacher. The babies are cared for in a separate area, and the parents can visit them. The participants are responsible for their own transportation.

Those participants who are WIA-eligible have a coordinator from WorkSource in Bellingham. This coordinator serves on the GRADS advisory board and on the Options High School Site Council. The coordinator visits the facility once a week or more if needed; he meets individually with each of "his" students. Once when he had to be out of town, he wrote each of them a note saying whom they could contact if they needed anything that week. Any participant, whether WIA-eligible or not, can go to WorkSource and get help finding a job or planning a career. Toward the end of GRADS, during the spring independent living unit, the coordinator comes in to talk to the class about WorkSource and the kinds of assistance it provides. He continues to meet one-on-one with the WIA-eligible participants to reassess their needs and to plan their next steps and summers, including work experience as interns if appropriate.

Last summer, 4 WIA-eligible GRADS participants enrolled in a summer information technology program in the mornings (funded by a Perkins Single-Parent grant). In the afternoons, 3 of them worked at the Bellingham Child Care Center as office aides (their infants stayed at GRADS during those hours). They also worked at the center before the information technology program began and after it ended. While at the child care center, both their GRADS teacher and their child care center supervisor consciously helped them assess operations so that in their own lives they could evaluate day care environments intelligently.

While the following profiles include GRADS, they illustrate the overall philosophy of ongoing integrated service and collaboration that characterizes the Northwest Washington WDC.

> A young woman who joined GRADS in September 1999 had been a high school dropout for 2 years. When she became pregnant and needed a place to live, her sister told her about the Opportunity Council, located at the WorkSource One-Stop center. The counselor there told her about GRADS and the assistance it provides toward a diploma or GED. She aims to earn a GED in January 2000. She first met the coordinator (noted above) when she entered GRADS, and her eligibility under WIA was documented. The coordinator will help her find employment after the GED; he is contacting employers inquiring about possible receptionist positions in a subsidized work experience (her job would be called an internship). DHHS will pay for child care once she gets a job, which she hopes will become a full-time, stable position. The coordinator will continue to provide whatever assistance is appropriate over the coming months. This participant and her baby have a 2-hour commute each way to GRADS, taking 3 buses in the morning and 3 buses in the afternoon.
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> In spring 1999, a 16-year-old girl, pregnant at the time, needed to find a job. She called WorkSource in Bellingham and was invited to go there for a small-group orientation. After the orientation, she was assigned to a coordinator. They talked, and working with him, she completed eligibility papers, filled out a Workforce Skill Standards Transferable Skills Workbook to assess her familiarity with certain skills and arrive at a starting point, and the coordinator helped her write a resume. He offered her an internship in the clothing section of the Western Washington University bookstore. This lasted a month. She noted, "I had a criminal record, and I could never get a job if it weren't for this internship." When the school year began she enrolled in GRADS, where she could bring her baby and has been able to work toward completing her diploma. Her plan is to stay home with the baby during summer 2000 and talk with her coordinator about pursuing a certificate program at Bellingham Technical College beginning in the fall.

Deception Pass State Park

Summer 1999 was the second summer of this academic credit-plus-work experience project held at Deception Pass State Park, which sees more than 4 million visitors a year. This past summer 23 students from 3 high schools arrived at the park daily by van, earning credits in English and environmental science in the mornings (while also fulfilling the diversified occupations requirement) and working in crews in the afternoon to renovate the park entrance areas. Hours were 8:00 am to 4:30 pm daily Monday through Thursday.

The project was a 3-way partnership involving the schools, the WDC (the office in Mount Vernon), and the state park. The idea began in 1997 when a coordinator from the Mount Vernon WDC, who communicated with the Secret Harbor School for incarcerated youth on Cypress Island, was asked by the school whether some of the youth could work at the park and have the WDC pay their wages. As it worked out, 6 young men did enroll in work experience at the park that summer. The coordinator began to envision more youth, particularly in-school youth, and inclusion of an environmental learning experience as well. The WDC coordinators knew that their schools had students who needed to make up credits and who also needed to work. On sharing the idea, an enthusiastic teacher at Anacortes High School took the idea to her new superintendent, who was receptive. A memorandum of understanding was written, specifying that the WDC would pay the wages for the work experience and would supply uniforms and tools; WDC would also pay the summer school tuition. This would go toward paying the salaries of 2 teachers who teamed up to provide the curricula—an English teacher and an environmental science teacher. The WDC provided transportation. In its second year, Oak Harbor High School supplied the park with a portable unit, which the park renovated into a good classroom. The park provided work supervision and instruction in first aid, safety, tools and equipment, and project maintenance.

The WDC needed to negotiate with each school district as to what the district would accept to fulfill a credit. The teachers' planned curriculum was presented, and each school district examined it. The proposed use of portfolios and the incorporation of the Workforce Skill Standards helped. The state workforce standards adopted to apply to all students in the state in fact parallel the WDC's Workforce Skill Standards, and the schools understood that common language. The proposed curriculum plan was accepted.

Recruiting the students was done individually, as the WDC coordinators and the school counselors identified juniors and seniors who were potentially WIA-eligible and who needed English and science credits. At each high school, the coordinator gathered small groups referred by the counselor to talk about Deception Pass. Word of mouth about Deception Pass turned up some students who wanted to be in this project but didn't need the credits; they were redirected to other openings.

On the last day of the project, school principals and other officials came to the park to hear presentations by the students and view the facilities and the renovated areas. After the project ended, 2 of the students used their portfolios as the basis for individual presentations to their school board.

The key to this project's success is considered to be the strong partnership among the PIC and its coordinator on this project, the teachers, and the park manager, all of whom are energetically devoted to youth and open to creative ideas. The academic component was different from school in that the teachers taught principles that were applicable "10 minutes later." The teachers had autonomy, flexibility, and enough computers for everyone. The students, who came from 3 distant high schools, learned to interact and get along with others they would never have met otherwise. Everyone had opportunities, through planned rotations, to lead their crew, thus addressing leadership, one of the 10 requirements for youth services under WIA.

For in-school youth, this type of project works well as a summer-only component of an integrated year-round/summer plan of service. Obstacles to trying to offer this particular program year round include working around school schedules and the time and logistics to provide the students with transportation. However, a coordinator's assessment of what the youth learned and mastered during this summer program may result in arranging for a more responsible part-time job during the school year. One student, now in 12th grade, noted that she works at a day care center part time and has more confidence in her leadership skills now that she has been a crew supervisor. For out-of-school youth the project could be year-round, with the portable classroom becoming a kind of Learning Center equipped for the GED.

Best SELF

Best SELF ("Summer Education, Learning and Fun") provides about 2,000 children in grades K-8 across 2 counties with classroom-based summer school in 10 schools (7 in Skagit County and 3 in Whatcom County), accented with community service and fun (such as swimming and field trips). Best SELF runs 9 weeks, Monday through Friday, operating a full-day program. Targeted toward enrolling at-risk elementary school students, it is open to any student. Its goals are to prevent summer loss of learning and to provide a safe and engaging place to be in the summer. The program will be expanded to operate after school during the school year as well, as described below.

A key tenet of this program is a high adult/student ratio. There are 5 staff for every classroom of about 20 children. Forty-five youth—28 of them WIA-eligible—worked in Best SELF in summer 1999, as Teen Leaders (classroom aides), with an emphasis on developing their leadership skills. Teen Leaders are encouraged to prepare lesson plans and projects that they can lead. Student teachers from Western Washington University and regular schoolteachers working for the summer also help make up the teaching staff; serving as role models for the Teen Leaders. Other youth interns also help with custodial or office work, depending on the immediate needs of each site. Because of its several goals, this program is considered by the WDC to be an especially "learning-rich" work experience for the youth.

Best SELF is partly funded by the county and partly funded through parent fees on a sliding scale. The program, which began in 1992, grew out of a partnership involving the county, the schools, and the WDC. The idea of a summer program targeted toward young children considered to be at risk was initially the vision of the Skagit County director of finance, and the county provided the initial funds to develop the program. The county provides funding and administrative support, such as registration and payroll. The schools provide facilities and transportation to and from the schools, as well as summer migrant and school lunch funds. The transit system provides field trip transportation. Using the Workforce Skills Standards, the WDC provided an underpinning for standards to be applied both to the children's curriculum (e.g., "here is a teachable moment where the students can do a project and learn both academic lessons and about a career") and to evaluation of staff (who use SCANS-based job descriptions and the WDC's progress reports). Classroom teachers use the progress reports to evaluate each Teen Leader (regardless of WIA-eligibility status) at 2 points, once in mid-summer and again at the end. WDC also pays the wages of the Teen Leaders who are WIA-eligible. As with every work experience, the WDC coordinator visits the schools at least every 2 weeks to pick up timesheets and touch base with the youth and their supervisors.

Best SELF has received a 3-year state Readiness to Learn grant (matched 50 percent by the county) to enable it to operate as an after-school program during the school year, from 3:00-6:00 pm. This will provide more year-round part-time "learning-rich" work experience opportunities for WIA-eligible youth.

The profile below illustrates how Northwest Washington WDC integrated Best SELF and other experiences into a progression of service delivery to a youth over several years:

> A young woman from Bellingham was in 11th grade when she first heard about summer jobs through the WDC. Her first year in the program she worked in the BEST Self program. This allowed her to gain work readiness, leadership, and interpersonal skills. During the academic year, while talking to her guidance counselor about her interest in the medical field, she was directed to

the WDC, where she met with a coordinator, established her eligibility, and attended the career decision-making workshop. She worked at the Interfaith Family Health Center the summer after her senior year, in the dental section as a dental assistant trainee. She completed the Scholarship Package, and at that time she switched coordinators and worked with the coordinator assigned to Bellingham Technical College, where she applied for a scholarship, passed those requirements, and enrolled in the dental assistant certificate program. As she related, "We turn in our grades to Dan (the coordinator), and we see Dan frequently." She will continue to work with Dan in completing the dental assistant program, with job search, placement, retention and followup in that field.

LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

The WDC operates all youth programs in-house except for basic skills training, foundation skills training, and vocational training. These services are provided by the schools and Learning Centers and funded through tuition-based payments. In addition, school personnel—guidance counselors, vocational education directors, and teachers—are the program's single most important recruitment source. In this section, we focus on the development of this key linkage between the WDC and the local school system, which has been the foundation for building an integrated summer/year-round program in northwest Washington.

Developing partnerships with the schools has been a long process. In the early years, some schools valued the WDC's persistence and its staff's accomplishments with at-risk youth. Other schools, in the perception of some WDC staff, were less willing to become involved with the WDC, thinking that the WDC "rewarded" those youth whom the schools felt did not deserve yet another chance. It has been important to the WDC to have the support of schools, but this required persistence to bring some school districts and teachers on board. Working with each school district to agree on the specific criteria for work-based learning documented through a portfolio in granting academic credit for participation in a WDC initiative has been particularly difficult. For example, some school districts will accept a detailed portfolio and/or a formal presentation based on the portfolio, while other school districts may not. To the extent that the WDC has involved the schools from the beginning, and teachers have been involved in developing the academic curriculum for the WDC programs, the school district has been more likely to approve the WDC's courses and participants' detailed portfolios for credit.

Currently, all the area schools have a working relationship with the WDC. The WDC's commitment to ensuring that youth at risk re-enroll or stay in school and graduate, and the fact that it pays tuition for summer school and for out-of-school youths' enrollment in Learning Centers, contribute to the schools' taking the WDC seriously. To the extent that school counselors and WDC coordinators have cultivated a professional relationship, counselors are more likely to call the WDC and to refer youth to the WDC's programs.

Northwest Washington WDC staff recommend that an SDA seeking a closer relationship with the schools find an individual within a school who is strongly devoted to youth, whether that individual is a teacher, counselor, or administrator, and begin the process of building a relationship with the school through that individual. A related suggestion is for the WDC to identify goals that it shares with the local school system and, on that basis, develop an active working relationship to achieve these goals.

JOB DEVELOPMENT, PLACEMENT, AND FOLLOWUP

The coordinator is responsible for job development. From their first contact with the WDC, youth are made aware of how to prepare themselves to be job-ready and aware of how to find and contact potential employers. Orientations for youth at the One-Stop centers focus on the job search. Training programs stress that the youth should maintain a positive attitude and that their job placements are not entitlements but privileges.

The coordinators use their range of contacts to find and maintain both subsidized and unsubsidized jobs. Prior to employment, the employers are asked to write a job description for the position the youth will be assuming, incorporating SCANS skills. The employer then shares the job description with the potential youth employee. The employer submits a progress report (Trainee Progress Report) to the WDC every 30 days. If a youth progresses well during the job, then the employer will write a recommendation letter for the youth's portfolio. Students keep these portfolios and can show them to future employers. While the coordinator's job development role is important, a major accomplishment for youth in the program is to find their own unsubsidized positions in their chosen fields.

Coordinators keep in contact with youth for at least several months after they have taken jobs. Following up with youth is embedded within each coordinator's responsibilities; coordinators follow up with youth as long as the youth need and desire assistance. The coordinators document their followups in the youth's file.

OUTCOMES

The WDC's performance measurement system is competency-based and is linked with performance-based outcomes. WDC staff do not consider the completion of a program to be an outcome indicator. They provide youth with individualized service and the necessary support they need in order for them to master specific competencies. Youth do not stop receiving services until they achieve the competencies or leave the program. On average, a youth receives services for about 2 years. During that time, the youth begin and terminate certain discrete programs and receive ongoing guidance.

The WDC has identified 3 general competencies youth need to meet: academic, pre-employment, and work maturity. For in-school youth, indicators of successful completion could include *entered employment*, *employment enhancement* (meeting 2 of the 3 competencies), or *completing a major academic level*. For out-of-school youth, successful completion could include *returning to school*, *completion of high school diploma or equivalent*, or *demonstrating educational and occupational competency*. The competencies are tailored to the age range of the youth. With this competency-based system, the WDC documents outcomes when the youth attains each goal--not at scheduled points in a calendar. Program data for 1999 indicate that 89 percent of in-school enrollees and 92 percent of out-of-school enrollees have achieved positive outcomes (i.e., have gained employability enhancement, attained an academic goal, or entered employment).

Currently, the MIS contains termination data for every individual. When an individual is judged to have completed a service (e.g., at the end of a summer work experience, at the end of the GRADS program, at the end of a GED prep/test process, etc.), or if the youth moves away or leaves for personal reasons with or without having achieved competencies, the coordinator submits a "JTPA Termination form" (Attachment 10) and backup documentation to WorkSource.

While WIA data requirements are not yet finalized, staff realize that they need to develop ways to further document individual achievements and outcomes (i.e., what basic skills a youth has mastered, according to what test; specifically, what pre-employment or work maturity skills a youth mastered). In addition, they plan to continue to record numbers of youth who earned a high school diploma, earned a GED, entered postsecondary education, completed such education, took a full-time job, and stayed and advanced in higher education or with that employer.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Northwest Washington WDC adheres to a philosophy of providing ongoing individual attention to youth. Its focus is the relationship between the coordinator and the youth. The coordinator has the autonomy to draw upon a range of opportunities and resources—during the summer and the school year—much like a menu, to serve youth over time.

There is a strong emphasis on staying in school and graduating. This emphasis is supported organizationally by partnerships with the schools and community organizations, focus on a good relationship between school counselor and WDC coordinator, encouraging coordinators to serve on school advisory boards, comprehensive incorporation of SCANS-based skills that both the WDC and the school system share, formal agreements with the schools to provide names of students on free or reduced-price lunch and names of students who have dropped out or are about to do so, and formal agreements with school districts stating criteria for accepting individual portfolios and work-based learning experiences for credit.

Practices that reinforce provision of ongoing individual attention include insistence that minimal paperwork be filled out during the first personal meeting with a youth, coordinators going to worksites in person to collect timesheets and talk with their youth and the supervisors, encouraging coordinators to serve on community boards and to be creative in identifying potential jobs and projects for the youth, strongly emphasizing the portfolio, and demanding a thorough assessment on the part of youth who apply for postsecondary scholarships sponsored by the WDC. Two tangible embodiments of the personal orientation are the file and individual development plan maintained by the coordinator and the portfolio created by the youth.

WIA is expected to change somewhat the relative emphasis of service delivery to in-school and out-of-school youth. It will call for some re-targeting in order to reach more out-of-school youth, as defined under WIA, and to try to serve more summer youth during the school year as well, to the extent that they are assessed as needing continuing services. Until now, WDC staff have believed that most summer youth participants only need a summer component (i.e., paid summer work experience and/or making up academic credits) and, therefore, for most participants, the summer program has been a stand-alone program with 12-month followup. This policy, as well as the 1994 criteria for determining the conditions for providing extended services, will be re-examined during spring and summer 2000, in light of WIA's requirements.

To meet the 10 required service provisions for youth, staff will seek more leadership opportunities for enrollees. Leading a work crew and planning and teaching lessons at a day care center or in Best SELF are seen as models in this area. Coordinators and MIS staff anticipate documenting more information on individual outcomes. The Youth Council is seen as a new way to increase community collaborations and emphasize competency attainment for all youth.

With a smaller combined WIA funding amount available to deliver expanded services, staff will consider such actions as placing stronger emphasis on ensuring that the youth attend and complete their school-year academic courses. This will save money that would have had to be spent on summer school tuition and incentive payments for make-up courses. Additional funding sources are being considered.

For example, the WDC will seek ways to encourage more youth to take advantage of all the services of the One-Stop centers. Certain services for youth 18 and older can utilize WIA's adult funds. The WDC is considering ways to collaborate with the state's other SDAs to possibly access TANF funds to provide youth services.

Lessons learned include realizing that meeting some of the requirements under WIA will take time, especially if new efforts are called for (e.g., it took time for the Northwest Washington WDC to build relationships with the schools); finding one individual in a school or organization who is deeply devoted to young people and starting communications there; being willing to consider adopting a common framework that a potential partner is already using in its mission to strengthen the workforce (in this case, SCANS); and ensuring that any contracts reflect a spirit of integration (e.g., calling for a longer timeframe; providing sequenced services that span full years).

While the WDC is examining each of its summer programs to find ways to expand them into integrated year-round programs, a more productive effort, staff believe, is to focus on the individual youth and see how the youth may benefit from participating in a mix of services, drawn from a wide-ranging menu of possibilities, in an ongoing way.

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